



DELI UNIVERSITY
LIBRY

DELHI UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Cl. No. C.11:4

F7.3

Ac. No 378683

Date of release for loan

11 AUG '91

This book should be returned on or before the date last stamped below. An overdue charge of one anna will be levied for each day the book is kept beyond the date.



A CENTURY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

*A COMPANION TO
ELTON'S SURVEYS OF ENGLISH LITERATURE
1780-1830 and 1830-1880*

EDITED BY

ALBERT A. COCK

PROFESSOR OF EDUCATION AND PHILOSOPHY IN UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE, SOUTHAMPTON

AND

MARGARET J. STEEL

LECTURER IN EDUCATION IN UNIVERSITY COLLEGE,
SOUTHAMPTON

IN FOUR BOOKS

BOOK III—POETRY, 1830-1880

LONDON

EDWARD ARNOLD & CO.

[*All rights reserved*]

A CENTURY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

In 4 Volumes, Crown 8vo.

Book I. Poetry, 1780-1830

Book II. Prose, 1780-1830

Book III. Poetry, 1830-1880

Book IV. Prose, 1830-1880

WORKS BY PROFESSOR ELTON

A SURVEY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE 1780-1830

2 Volumes, Demy 8vo.

A SURVEY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE 1830-1880

2 Volumes, Demy 8vo.

LITERARY MONOGRAPHS

Chapters from the Author's 'Survey of English Literature,' revised and partly re-written, with chronological tables and short notes.

Crown 8vo, paper or cloth.

Sir Walter Scott

Wordsworth

Shelley

Tennyson and Matthew Arnold

The Brownings

Dickens and Thackeray

LONDON: EDWARD ARNOLD & CO.

NOTE

A 'survey' of a literary period is at best a book about books, and is meant to draw readers to the originals, in the hope that the compass may have been set reasonably right for their guidance. Such a work can only contain brief unsatisfying extracts from the classics themselves. And a decent surveyor, above all if he chance to have been also a teacher, feels dejected at the idea of his book being, possibly, used by younger students, as something to be 'got up,' for scholastic purposes, on its own account. But not every school library, or private one, is likely to contain all the originals that are wanted ; and the obscurer writers, in particular, may easily go to the wall. In any case, a substantial anthology, both of prose and verse, of authors arranged in due perspective, can be only to the good.

For these reasons I welcome the present *Companion* to my volumes, not only because it will make them more useful, but, much more, for its intrinsic value. The publisher is wholly responsible for the enterprise ; and the editors, for the selection of passages and for the execution of the book. This being clear, I may be allowed to say that the choice of extracts, and the general proportioning of the work, strike me as happy.

The collection ought to give an excellent 'view from the air' of the main lines of our literature between the French Revolution and the First Jubilee.

OLIVER ELTON.

EDITORS' PREFACE

This Companion to Professor Oliver Elton's four volumes entitled *A Survey of English Literature, 1780-1830*, and *A Survey of English Literature, 1830-1880*, has been prepared for such readers thereof as feel the need of a series of extracts illustrating that work. To that end the Editors have compiled four books which together form a continuous illustration of the themes and authors studied in the *Surveys*. Books I and III deal with the poetry of 1780-1830 and 1830-1880 respectively, while Books II and IV similarly illustrate the prose of the two half-centuries. In most cases a short quotation from the *Surveys* is prefixed to the selected passages, but these are chiefly meant to provide an immediate reference to Professor Elton's work itself, the critical *aperçus* in which can only be fully appreciated if illustrative extracts are at hand. To whet the appetite for more from each author and to help to understand but not to provide a substitute for the *Surveys* has been our aim. It will be evident that in Books I and II the references are to the first *Survey*, and in Books III and IV to the second.

In thus making acquaintance, through these selections, with the poetry and prose of the century 1780-1880, the student will embark upon a voyage which is essentially one of discovery. The 'Anticipations' in the *Survey* form a first chart in embarking upon that voyage. How far the Romantic revolt, the Renaissance of wonder and the Return to Nature waxed or waned in the century the reader must determine for himself, guided by the *Survey*, by the authors themselves, represented in this *Companion*, and by his own reading of history from 1780-1880. Much daring experiment in form and thought will be, we think, apparent, but there

is nevertheless a goodly heritage retained from the past and transmitted to the future. A century adorned by Blake and Crabbe, by Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats and Shelley, by Tennyson, Browning and Matthew Arnold, and by such masters of prose as Gibbon, Scott, Lamb, de Quincey and Hazlitt, and Carlyle, Ruskin, Dickens, Thackeray, George Eliot and Meredith, affords the reader not one but a thousand delights and joys.

The Editors desire to record their grateful thanks to Professor Elton for the kindly interest he has taken in their work, and for the very generous assistance he has given them with the proofs.

Except where otherwise stated, the dates given are those of publication.

A. A. C.

M. J. S.

SOUTHAMPTON,
July, 1927.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
NOTE. By Professor OLIVER ELTON	3
EDITORS' PREFACE	5

THE OXFORD MOVEMENT

JOHN KEBLE (1792-1866)	
<i>From</i> MORNING (<i>The Christian Year</i> , 1827) . . .	15
<i>From</i> THE WATERFALL (<i>Lyra Innocentium</i> , 1846). . .	15
JOHN HENRY NEWMAN (1801-1890)	
FIFTH CHORUS OF ANGELICALS (<i>The Dream of Gerontius</i> , 1865)	16
FREDERICK WILLIAM FABER (1814-1863)	
AGED CITIES (1856)	18
RICHARD CHENEVIX TRENCH (1807-1886)	
GIBRALTAR (1835).	18
JOHN MASON NEALE (1818-1866)	
<i>From</i> JERUSALEM (1865)	19

GREATER POETS

MATTHEW ARNOLD (1822-1888)	
SHAKESPEARE (1849)	20
EMPEDOCLES MUSES (<i>Empedocles on Etna</i> , 1852) . . .	20
SONG OF CALLICLES (<i>Empedocles on Etna</i> , 1852) . . .	22
MORALITY (<i>Stanzas 1 and 2</i>) (1852)	24
PHILOMELA (1852)	24
<i>From</i> THE SCHOLAR GYPSY (1853).	25
REQUIESCAT (1853)	27
<i>From</i> THYRSIS (1858)	27
DOVER BEACH (1867)	28
ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON (1809-1892)	
ST. AGNES' EVE (1842, <i>composed</i> 1837)	30
SIR GALAHAD (1842)	31
<i>From</i> THE EOTOS EATERS (1842)	33

	PAGE
ULYSSES (1842)	35
OF OLD SAT FREEDOM ON THE HEIGHTS (1842)	37
BREAK, BREAK, BREAK (1842)	38
<i>Stanzas from IN MEMORIAM</i> (1850)	39
<i>Songs from THE PRINCESS</i> (1850) :	
1. THE SPLENDOUR FALLS ON CASTLE WALLS	43
2. TEARS, IDLE TEARS	43
3. HOME THEY BROUGHT HER WARRIOR DEAD	44
4. ASK ME NO MORE	44
THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE (1854)	45
WILL (<i>Stanza 1</i>)	47
<i>From MAUD</i> (1855) :	
1. SEE WHAT A LOVELY SHELL	47
2. O THAT 'TWERE POSSIBLE	48
THE HIGHER PANTHEISM (1869)	48
TO VIRGIL (1882)	49
CROSSING THE BAR (1889)	51
ROBERT BROWNING (1812-1889)	
<i>Song from PARACELSUS</i> (1835)	52
PIPPA'S SONG (<i>Pippa Passes</i> , 1841)	52
HOW THEY BROUGHT THE GOOD NEWS (1845)	53
THE LOST LEADER (1845)	55
HOME THOUGHTS, FROM ABROAD (1845)	56
LOVE AMONG THE RUINS (1855)	57
A GRAMMARIAN'S FUNERAL (1855)	60
ABT VOGLER (1864)	64
HERVÉ RIEL (1871)	69
EPILOGUE TO ASOLANDO (1889)	74
ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING (1806-1861)	
THE SLEEP (1838)	75
<i>From SONNETS FROM THE PORTUGUESE</i> (1847) :	
v. I LIFT MY HEAVY HEART UP SOLEMNLY	77
xliii. HOW DO I LOVE THEE ?	77
BUT THEN THE THRUSHES SANG (<i>Aurora Leigh</i> , 1857)	78
A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT (1862)	79
DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI (1828-1882)	
THE BLESSED DAMOZEL (1850)	80
MY SISTER'S SLEEP (1850)	85
<i>Sonnets from THE HOUSE OF LIFE</i> (begun 1870) :	
lxxiv. S. LUKE THE PAINTER	87
lxxxvi. LOST DAYS	87
xcvii. A SUPERScription	88
CHRISTINA GEORGINA ROSSETTI (1830-1894)	
SPRING QUIET (written 1847)	88
BITTER FOR SWEET (written 1848)	89
SUNG (written 1848)	89

CONTENTS

9

	PAGE
HOLY INNOCENTS (written 1853)	90
ECHO (written 1854)	91
A BIRTHDAY (written 1857)	91
UPHILL (written 1858)	92
From OLD AND NEW YEAR DITTIES (written 1860)	92
CONSIDER (written 1863)	93
THE LOWEST PLACE (written 1863)	94
A CHRISTMAS CAROL (written before 1872)	94
<i>Sonnet from MONNA INNOMINATA</i> (written before 1882)	95
HEAVEN OVERARCHES (written 1893)	96
. WILLIAM MORRIS (1834-1896)	
THE SAILING OF THE SWORD (1858)	96
From THE LIFE AND DEATH OF JASON (1867):	
1. THE FINDING OF THE FLEECE (from Book ix).	98
2. THE TRIBUTE OF MORRIS TO HIS MASTER (from Book xvii)	100
ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE (1837-1909)	
CHORUS from ATALANTA IN CALYDON (1865)	100
From SAPPHICS (1866)	101
A MATCH (1866)	102
AUTUMN IN CORNWALL (1878)	104
TRANSLATION FROM VICTOR HUGO (1878)	105
THE GARDEN OF PROSERPINE (1878)	106
From HERTHA (1887)	109
GEORGE MEREDITH (1828-1909)	
DIRGE IN THE WOODS (1870).	109
BREATH OF THE BRIAR (1892)	110
YOUTH IN AGE (1908)	110

LESSER POETS

I. *Poets of the Age before the rise of Tennyson*

SIR HENRY TAYLOR (1800-1886)

SONG (1864)	111
-----------------------	-----

THOMAS WADE (1805-1875)

THE BURIED BUTTERFLY (1839)	112
---------------------------------------	-----

II. "*Spasmodic*" Poets

ALEXANDER SMITH (1830-1867)

From GLASGOW (<i>City Poems</i> , 1857)	112
--	-----

SYDNEY THOMPSON DOBELL (1824-1874)

A NUPTIAL EVE (1856).	114
-------------------------------	-----

	PAGE
III. <i>Poets before the rise of Rossetti and Morris</i>	
RICHARD MONCKTON MILNES, LORD HOUGHTON (1809-1885)	
SHADOWS (1865)	116
EBENEZER JONES (1820-1860)	
From INACTIVITY (1843)	117
ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH (1819-1861)	
SAY NOT THE STRUGGLE NAUGHT AVAILETH (1849)	118
ASPIRATION (<i>Dipsychus</i> , begun 1850)	119
WHERE LIES THE LAND ? (1852)	119
IV. <i>Poets of the Romantic Impulse of the Fifties and Sixties</i>	
COVENTRY PATMORE (1823-1886)	
REGINA CÆLI (1878)	120
THE TOYS (1878)	120
DIGBY MACKWORTH DOLBEN (1848-1868)	
GOODNIGHT (written 1864)	121
BEYOND (written 1866)	122
ROBERT STEPHEN HAWKER (1803-1875)	
THE SONG OF THE WESTERN MEN (1862)	123
From THE QUEST OF THE SANGRAAL (1864)	124
SEBASTIAN EVANS (1830-1909)	
SHADOWS (1865)	125
ANNE EVANS (1820-1870)	
TIRLY-WIRLY (1880)	125
TWO RED ROSES ON A TREE (1880)	126
RICHARD WATSON DIXON (1833-1900)	
THE FEATHERS OF THE WILLOW (1864)	127
A. W. E. O'SHAUGHNESSY (1844-1881)	
ODE (1874)	127
IF SHE BUT KNEW (1881)	129
EDWARD FITZGERALD (1809-1883)	
THE MEADOWS IN SPRING (1831)	130
Stanzas from OMAR KHAYYAM (1859)	132
JAMES THOMSON (1834-1882)	
Stanzas from SUNDAY UP THE RIVER (1862)	135
Stanzas from THE CITY OF DREADFUL NIGHT (1874)	136

CONTENTS

11
PAGE

HON. RODEN NOEL (1834-1894)	
DARK SPRING (<i>A Little Child's Monument</i> , 1881)	137
JEAN INGELow (1820-1897)	
<i>Stanzas from THE HIGH TIDE ON THE COAST OF</i> LINCOLNSHIRE, 1571 (1863)	138
ROBERT, EARL OF LYTTON (OWEN MEREDITH)	
<i>Stanzas from CINTRA</i> (1868)	139
JOHN BYRNE LEICESTER WARREN, LORD DE TABLEY (1835-1895)	
A FROSTY DAY (1870)	140
AN AUTUMN SERENADE (1873)	141
SIR ALFRED COMYN LYALL (1835-1911)	
SOMNIA : INDIA, 1857 (1889)	142
SIR EDWIN ARNOLD (1832-1904)	
<i>Peroration to THE LIGHT OF ASIA</i> (1879)	143
WILLIAM JOHNSON CORY (1832-1892)	
HERACLITUS (<i>Ionica</i> , 1858)	143
SONG (<i>Ionica</i> , 1858)	144
MARGARET VELEY (1843-1887)	
A LUTANIST (c. 1872)	144
EMILY BRONTË (1818-1848)	
THE OLD-STOIC (1846)	146
NO COWARD SOUL IS MINE (1848)	147
MORTIMER COLLINS (1827-1846)	
EVENSONG (1860)	148
CHARLES KINGSLEY (1819-1875)	
THE SANDS OF DEE (1858)	149
THREE FISHERS (1858)	150
THE 'OLD, OLD SONG' (<i>The Water Babies</i> , 1862)	150
HENRY KINGSLEY (1830-1876)	
MAGDALEN	151
THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY (1800-1859)	
THE ARMADA (1848)	152
EPITAPH ON A JACOBITE (1845)	156
WILLIAM EDMONDSTOUNE AYTOUN (1813-1865)	
<i>Stanzas from EDINBURGH AFTER FLODDEN</i> (1848)	156

	PAGE
SIR FRANCIS HASTINGS DOYLE (1810-1888)	
THE PRIVATE OF THE BUFFS (1866) . . .	159
ANDREW LANG (1844-1912)	
THE ODYSSEY	160
ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON (1850-1894)	
REQUIEM (1887)	161
IN THE HIGHLANDS (1887)	161
THOMAS EDWARD BROWN (1830-1897)	
VESPER (written 1878)	162
GEORGE MACDONALD (1824-1905)	
THAT HOLY THING (1883)	162

IRISH POETS

JAMES CLARENCE MANGAN (1803-1849)	
MY DARK ROSALEEN (1845)	163
SIR SAMUEL FERGUSON (1810-1866)	
THE FAIR HILLS OF IRELAND (1865)	166
WILLIAM ALLINGHAM (1824-1889)	
THE FAIRIES (1854)	167
ROBIN REDBREAST (1865)	169
AUBREY THOMAS DE VERE (1814-1902)	
THE SUN-GOD (1843)	170

DIALECT POETRY

WILLIAM BARNES (1801-1886)	
THE MOTHERLESS CHILD (1859)	171
LINDEN LEA (1859)	172

LIGHTER VERSE

FRANCIS SYLVESTER MAHONY (1804-1866)	
THE SHANDON BELLS (1834)	173
RICHARD HARRIS BARHAM (1788-1845)	
AS I LAYE A-THYNKYNGE (<i>Ingoldsby Legends</i> , 1845)	175

CONTENTS .

13

	PAGE
CHARLES STUART CALVERLEY (1831-1884)	
STRIKING (1867)	177
BALLAD (Part I) (1872)	178
PEACE: A STUDY (1872)	179
FREDERICK LOCKER-LAMPSON (1821-1895)	
PICCADILLY (<i>London Lyrics</i> , 1857)	180
WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY (1811-1863)	
THE CANE-BOTTOMED CHAIR (1855)	181
CHARLES LUTWIDGE DODGSON (Lewis Carroll) (1832-1898)	
YOU ARE OLD, FATHER WILLIAM (<i>Alice in Wonderland</i> , 1865)	184
EDWARD LEAR (1812-1888)	
<i>Three Rhymes from THE BOOK OF NONSENSE</i> (1846)	
1. THERE WAS AN OLD PERSON OF HURST	185
2. THERE WAS A YOUNG LADY OF NORWAY	185
3. THERE WAS AN OLD MAN WITH A POKER	185
SIR WILLIAM SCHWENK GILBERT (1836-1911)	
EMILY, JOHN, JAMES, AND I (<i>The Bab Ballads</i> , 1878)	186
INDEX TO FIRST LINES	189

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Acknowledgments for permission to reprint copyright poems are due to the following authors, executors and publishers: Messrs. George Bell & Sons, Ltd., for two poems by C. S. Calverley and two by Coventry Patmore; Messrs. Constable & Co., Ltd., London, and Messrs. Charles Scribners' Sons, New York, for three poems by George Meredith; Messrs. Ellis for three sonnets from *The House of Life*, by D. G. Rossetti; Messrs. W. Heinemann, Ltd., for the passages from Swinburne, Messrs. Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., Ltd., for the Hon. Roden Noel's *Dark Spring* from *A Little Child's Monument*; Sir A. C. Lyall's *Somnia*, and an extract from Sir Edwin Arnold's *The Light of Asia*; Messrs. Longmans, Green & Co., Ltd., for an extract from Jean Ingelow's *The High Tide on the Coast of Lincolnshire*, and for Andrew Lang's sonnet *The Odyssey*; the executors of the late Dr. George Macdonald and Messrs. Chatto & Windus for *That Holy Thing*; Messrs. Macmillan & Co., Ltd., for Tennyson's *To Virgil and Crossing the Bar*, Christina Rossetti's *Heaven Overarches*, *A Christmas Carol*, and a sonnet from *Monna Innominata*, T. E. Brown's *Vespers* and W. S. Gilbert's *Emily, John, James and I* from *The Bab Ballads*; Mr. John Murray for Browning's *Hervé Riel* and *Epilogue to Asolando*; Mr. Lloyd Osbourne and Messrs. Chatto & Windus for R. L. Stevenson's *Requiem* and *In the Highlands*; and the representatives of Miss Margaret Veley for *A Lutanist*.

THE OXFORD MOVEMENT

JOHN KEBLE

Stanzas from 'Morning'

(From *The Christian Year*)

(1827)

We need not bid, for cloistered cell,
Our neighbour and our work farewell,
Nor strive to wind ourselves too high
For sinful man beneath the sky :

The trivial round, the common task,
Would furnish all we ought to ask ;
Room to deny ourselves ; a road
To bring us daily nearer God.

Seek we no more ; content with these,
Let present rapture, comfort, ease,
As Heaven shall bid them, come and go :—
The secret this of rest below.

Only, O Lord, in Thy dear love
Fit us for perfect rest above ;
And help us, this and every day,
To live more nearly as we pray.

Stanzas from 'The Waterfall'

(From *Lyra Innocentium*)

(1846)

* * * * *

Go where the waters fall,
Sheer from the mountain's height—

Mark how a thousand streams in one,—
 One in a thousand on they fare,
 Now flashing to the sun,
 Now still as beast in lair.

Now round the rock, now mounting o'er,
 In lawless dance they win their way,
 Still seeming more and more
 To swell as we survey.

They rush and roar, they whirl and leap,
 Not wilder drives the wintry storm.
 Yet a strong law they keep,
 Strange powers their course inform.

Even so the mighty skyborn stream ;
 Its living waters from above
 All marred and broken seem,
 No union and no love.

Yet in dim caves they softly blend
 In dreams of mortals unespied :
 One is their awful end,
 One their unfailing Guide.

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN

The *Dream of Gerontius*, Newman's only long poem . . . carries us at once into the land of lonely vision where his true life is lived.—(*Survey*, i. 201.)

Fifth Chorus of Angelicals

(From *The Dream of Gerontius*) (1865)

Praise to the Holiest in the height,
 And in the depth be praise ;
 In all His words most wonderful,
 Most sure in all His ways. °

O loving wisdom of our God !
When all was sin and shame,
A second Adam to the fight
And to the rescue came.

O wisest love ! that flesh and blood
Which did in Adam fail,
Should strive afresh against the foe,
Should strive and should prevail ;

And that a higher gift than grace
Should flesh and blood refine,
God's Presence and His very Self,
And Essence all-divine.

O generous love ! that He, Who smote
In Man for man the foe,
The double agony in Man
For man should undergo ;

And in the garden secretly,
And on the Cross on high,
Should teach His brethren, and inspire
To suffer and to die.

Praise to the Holiest in the height,
And in the depth be praise :
In all His words most wonderful,
Most sure in all His ways.

FREDERICK WILLIAM FABER

He too descends, in a measure, from Wordsworth ; and he is most truly a poet in his secular hours. When he sings of the Cherwell and of Oxford . . . he stands for a moment beside the author of *Thyrsis* as a master of windy landscape in water-colour.—(*Survey*, i. 203.)

Aged Cities (1856)

I have known cities with the strong-armed Rhine
Clasping their mouldered quays in lordly sweep ;
And lingered where the Maine's low waters shine
Through Tyrian Frankfort ; and been fain to weep
'Mid the green cliffs where pale Mosella laves
That Roman sepulchre, imperial Treves.
Ghent boasts her street, and Bruges her moonlight
square ;

And holy Mechlin, Rome of Flanders, stands,
Like a queen-mother, on her spacious lands ;
And Antwerp shoots her glowing spire in air.
Yet I have seen no place, by inland brook,
Hill-top, or plain, or trim arcaded bowers,
That carries age so nobly in its look,
As Oxford with the sun upon her towers.

C

RICHARD CHENEVIX TRENCH

Gibraltar (1835)

England, we love thee better than we know—
And this I learned, when after wanderings long
'Mid people of another stock and tongue,
I heard again thy martial music blow,
And saw thy gallant children to and fro
Pace, keeping ward at one of those huge gates,
Which like twin giants watch the Herculean straits :
When first I came in sight of that brave show,
It made my very heart within me dance,
To think that thou thy proud foot shouldst advance

Forward so far into the mighty sea ;
 Joy was it and exultation to behold
 Thine ancient standard's rich emblazonry,
 A glorious picture by the wind enrolled.

JOHN MASON NEALE

The work of actual translation [of the Latin hymnody] was taken in hand by John Mason Neale, a very learned ecclesiastical scholar, and a metrist of unwonted skill and resources, who was also versed in music . . . he adapted many mediæval carols, and ' Good King Wenceslas ' is of his own making.—(*Survey*, i. 203, 204.)

Stanzas from ' Jerusalem '

(1865)

Jerusalem the glorious !
 The glory of the Elect !
 O dear and future vision
 That eager hearts expect :
 Even now by faith I see thee,
 Even here thy walls discern :
 To thee my thoughts are kindled,
 And strive and pant and yearn :

Jerusalem the onely,
 That look'st from heaven below,
 In thee is all my glory ;
 In me is all my woe !
 And though my body may not,
 My spirit seeks thee fain,
 Till flesh and earth return me
 To earth and flesh again.

O none can tell thy bulwarks,
 How gloriously they rise :
 O none can tell thy capitals
 Of beautiful device :
 Thy loveliness oppresses
 All human thought and heart :
 And none, O peace, O Syon,
 Can sing thee as thou art.

GREATER POETS

MATTHEW ARNOLD

. . . on his own upland of contemplative, intellectually impassioned poetry, and in purity of tone and colour, he has few companions. . . .

And all the time, all his days, there hovered before him the true artist's ideal of what he himself calls 'the law of pure and flawless workmanship'; and that is Matthew Arnold's real praise.—(*Survey*, i. 262, 278.)

Shakespeare

(1849)

Others abide our question. Thou art free.
We ask and ask—Thou smilest and art still,
Out-topping knowledge. For the loftiest hill
Who to the stars uncrowns his majesty,

Planting his steadfast footsteps in the sea,
Making the heaven of heavens his dwelling-place,
Spares but the cloudy border of his base
To the foil'd searching of mortality;

And thou, who didst the stars and sunbeams know,
Self-school'd, self-scann'd, self-honour'd, self-secure,
Didst stand on earth unguess'd at.—Better so!

All pains the immortal spirit must endure,
All weakness that impairs, all griefs which bow,
Find their sole voice in that victorious brow.

Empedocles Muses

(From *Empedocles on Etna*)

(1852)

And you, ye stars,
Who slowly begin to marshal,
As of old, in the fields of heaven,
Your distant, melancholy lines!
Have you, too, survived yourselves? "

Are you, too, what I fear to become ?
 You, too, once lived ;
 You too moved joyfully,
 Among august companions,
 In an older world, peopled by Gods,
 In a mightier order,
 The radiant, rejoicing, intelligent Sons of Heaven.
 But now, ye kindle
 Your lonely, cold-shining lights,
 • Unwilling lingerers
 In the heavenly wilderness,
 For a younger, ignoble world ;
 And renew, by necessity,
 Night after night your courses,
 In echoing, unneared silence,
 Above a race you know not—
 Uncaring and undelighted,
 Without friend and without home ;
 Weary like us, though not
 Weary with our weariness.

No, no, ye stars ! there is no death with you,
 No languor, no decay ! languor and death,
 They are with me, not you ! ye are alive—
 Ye, and the pure dark ether where ye ride
 Brilliant above me ! And thou, fiery world,
 That sapp'st the vitals of the terrible mount
 Upon whose charr'd and quaking crust I stand—
 Thou, too, brimmet with life !—the sea of cloud
 That heaves its white and billowy vapours up
 To moat this isle of ashes from the world,
 Lives ; and that other fainter sea, far down,
 O'er whose lit floor a road of moonbeams leads
 To Etna's Liparëan sister-fires
 And the long dusky line of Italy—
 That mild and luminous floor of waters lives,
 With held-in joy swelling its heart—I only,
 Whose spring of hope is dried, whose spirit has fail'd,

I, who have not, like these, in solitude
 Maintain'd courage and force, and in myself
 Nursed an immortal vigour—I alone
 Am dead to life and joy, therefore I read
 In all things my own deadness.

Song of Callicles

(From *Empedocles on Etna*)

(1852)

Through the black, rushing smoke-bursts,
 Thick breaks the red flame ;
 All Etna heaves fiercely
 Her forest-clothed frame.

Not here, O Apollo !
 Are haunts meet for thee.
 But, where Helicon breaks down
 In cliff to the sea.

Where the moon-silver'd inlets
 Send far their light voice
 Up the still vale of Thisbe—
 O speed, and rejoice !

On the sward at the cliff-top
 Lie strewn the white flocks ;
 On the cliff-side the pigeons
 Roost deep in the rocks.

In the moonlight the shepherds,
 Soft lull'd by the rills,
 Lie wrapt in their blankets
 Asleep on the hills.

—What forms are these coming
 So white through the gloom ?
 What garments out-glistening
 The gold-flower'd broom ? c

What sweet breathing presence
Out-perfumes the thyme ?
• What voices enrapture
The night's balmy prime ?—

'Tis Apollo comes leading
His choir, the Nine.
—The leader is fairest,
But all are divine.

They are lost in the hollows !
They stream up again !
What seeks on this mountain
The glorified train ?—

They bathe on this mountain,
In the spring by their road ;
Then on to Olympus,
Their endless abode.

—*Whose praise do they mention ?*
Of what is it told ?—
What will be for ever ;
What was from of old.

First hymn they the Father
Of all things ;—and then,
The rest of immortals,
The action of men.

The day in his hotness,
The strife with the palm ;
The night in her silence,
The stars in their calm.

Morality

(1852)

(Stanzas 1 and 2)

We cannot kindle when we will
 The fire which in the heart resides ;
 The spirit bloweth and is still,
 In mystery our soul abides.
 But tasks in hours of insight will'd
 Can be through hours of gloom fulfill'd.

With aching hands and bleeding feet
 We dig and heap, lay stone on stone ;
 We bear the burden and the heat
 Of the long day, and wish 'twere done.
 Not till the hours of light return,
 All we have built do we discern.

Philomela

(1852)

Hark ! ah, the nightingale—
 The tawny-throated !
 Hark, from that moonlit cedar what a burst !
 What triumph ! hark !—what pain !

O wanderer from a Grecian shore,
 Still, after many years, in distant lands,
 Still nourishing in thy bewilder'd brain
 That wild, unquench'd, deep-sunken, old-world pain—
 Say, will it never heal ?
 And can this fragrant lawn
 With its cool trees, and night,
 And the sweet, tranquil Thames,
 And moonshine, and the dew,
 To thy rack'd heart and brain
 Afford no balm ?

Dost thou to-night behold,
 Here, through the moonlight on this English grass,
 The unfriendly palace in the Thracian wild ?
 Dost thou again peruse
 With hot cheeks and sear'd eyes
 The too clear web, and thy dumb sister's shame ?
 Dost thou once more assay
 Thy flight, and feel come over thee,
 Poor fugitive, the feathery change
 Once more, and once more seem to make resound
 With love and hate, triumph and agony,
 Lone Daulis, and the high Cephissian vale ?
 Listen, Eugenia—
 How thick the bursts come crowding through the leaves !
 Again—thou hearest ?
 Eternal passion !
 Eternal pain !

From 'The Scholar Gypsy'

(1853)

O born in days when wits were fresh and clear,
 And life ran gaily as the sparkling Thames ;
 Before this strange disease of modern life,
 With its sick hurry, its divided aims,
 Its heads o'er-tax'd, its palsied hearts, was rife—
 Fly hence, our contact fear !
 Still fly, plunge deeper in the bowering wood !
 Averse, as Dido did, with gesture stern,
 From her false friend's approach in Hades turn,
 Wave us away, and keep thy Solitude.

Still nursing the unconquerable hope,
 Still clutching the inviolable shade,
 With a free onward impulse brushing through,
 By night, the silver'd branches of the glade—
 Far on the forest skirts, where none pursue,
 On some mild pastoral slope

Emerge, and resting on the moonlit pales,
 Freshen thy flowers, as in former years,
 With dew, or listen with enchanted ears,
 From the dark dingles, to the nightingales.

But fly our paths, our feverish contact fly !
 For strong the infection of our mental strife,
 Which, though it gives no bliss, yet spoils for rest ;
 And we should win thee from thy own fair life,
 Like us distracted, and like us unblest.
 Soon, soon thy cheer would die,
 Thy hopes grow timorous, and unfix'd thy powers,
 And thy clear aims be cross and shifting made :
 And then thy glad perennial youth would fade,
 Fade, and grow old at last and die like ours.

Then fly our greetings, fly our speech and smiles !
 —As some grave Tyrian trader, from the sea,
 Descried at sunrise an emerging prow
 Lifting the cool-hair'd creepers stealthily,
 The fringes of a southward-facing brow
 Among the Ægean isles :
 And saw the merry Grecian coaster come,
 Freighted with amber grapes, and Chian wine,
 Green bursting figs, and tunnies steep'd in brine ;
 And knew the intruders on his ancient home,

The young light-hearted Masters of the waves ;
 And snatch'd his rudder, and shook out more sail,
 And day and night held on indignantly
 O'er the blue Midland waters with the gale,
 Betwixt the Syrtes and soft Sicily,
 To where the Atlantic raves
 Outside the Western Straits, and unbent sails
 There, where down cloudy cliffs, through sheets of
 foam,
 Shy traffickers, the dark Iberians come ;
 And on the beach undid his corded bales,

Requiescat

(1853)

Strew on her roses, roses,
' And never a spray of yew !
In quiet she reposes ;
Ah ! would that I did too.

Her mirth the world required ;
She bathed it in smiles of glee.
But her heart was tired, tired,
And now they let her be.

Her life was turning, turning,
In mazes of heat and sound ;
But for peace her soul was yearning,
And now peace laps her round.

Her cabin'd, ample spirit,
It flutter'd and fail'd for breath ;
To-night it doth inherit
The vasty hall of death.

From 'Thyrsis'

(1858)

So, some tempestuous morn in early June,
When the year's primal burst of bloom is o'er,
Before the roses and the longest day—
When garden-walks, and all the grassy floor,
With blossoms red and white of fallen May,
And chestnut-flowers are strewn—
So have I heard the cuckoo's parting cry,
From the wet field, through the vext garden-trees,
Come with the volleying rain and tossing breeze :
The bloom is gone, and with the bloom go I !

Too quick despairer, wherefore wilt thou go ?
Soon will the high Midsummer pomps come on,
Soon will the musk carnations break and swell,
Soon shall we have gold-dusted snapdragon,
Sweet-William with his homely cottage-smell,
And stocks in fragrant blow ;

Roses that down the alleys shine afar,
 And open, jasmine-muffled lattices,
 And groups under the dreaming garden-trees,
 And the full moon, and the white evening-star.

He hearkens not!—light comer, he is flown!
 What matters it? next year he will return,
 And we shall have him in the sweet spring-days,
 With whitening hedges, and uncrumpling fern,
 And blue-bells trembling by the forest-ways,
 And scent of hay new-mown.
 But Thyrsis never more we swains shall see;
 See him come back, and cut another reed,
 And blow a strain the world at last shall heed—
 For Time, not Corydon, hath conquer'd thee!

Dover Beach

(1867)

The sea is calm to-night,
 The tide is full, the moon lies fair
 Upon the Straits;—on the French coast, the light
 Gleams, and is gone; the cliffs of England stand,
 Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.
 Come to the window, sweet is the night-air!
 Only, from the long line of spray
 Where the ebb meets the moon-blanch'd sand,
 Listen! you hear the grating roar
 Of pebbles which the waves draw back, and fling,
 At their return, up the high strand,
 Begin, and cease, and then again begin,
 With tremulous cadence slow, and bring
 The eternal note of sadness in.

Sophocles long ago
 Heard it on the Ægean, and it brought
 Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow
 Of human misery; we
 Find also in the sound a thought,
 Hearing it by this distant northern sea.

The sea of faith
 Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
 Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furl'd ;
 But now I only hear
 Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
 Retreating to the breath
 Of the night-wind down the vast edges drear
 And naked shingles of the world.

Ah, love, let us be true
 To one another ! for the world, which seems
 To lie before us like a land of dreams,
 So various, so beautiful, so new,
 Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
 Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain ;
 And we are here as on a darkling plain
 Swept with confused alarms of struggle and fight,
 Where ignorant armies clash by night.

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

It was natural that Arthur Hallam should write that 'the true heir is found'—the heir to Keats ; and Wordsworth, who was hard to please, saluted Tennyson as 'decidedly the first of our living poets.' ♥ . .

Perhaps his strongest impulse as an artist is to pack his material. He was elaborate and condensed to begin with, and without effort. His diction was naturally curious and his rhythm somewhat slow. Then he followed two different paths. He perfected the elaborate style, the many-faceted verse and image, applying it to ever-new purposes—to reflective writing, to impassioned writing, and above all to natural description, in which he is one of the masters. But from this style, which is his regular and instinctive one, he also tries to get away ; he seeks to be bare and simple, above all in the utterance of lyrical or heroic emotion. And this end also he attains. . . .

And, as we have seen, he can sing ; now and then simply, more often not so simply, but still with a wonderful trained voice of much compass. Tennyson is the chief poet, during the nineteenth century, of the tribe to which belong Milton and Gray—and, let us add, his own master, Virgil.—(*Survey*, i. 330, 331, 361.)

St. Agnes' Eve

(1842, composed 1837)

Deep on the convent-roof the snows
 Are sparkling to the moon :
 My breath to heaven like vapour goes :
 May my soul follow soon !
 The shadows of the convent-towers
 Slant down the snowy sward,
 Still creeping with the creeping hours
 That lead me to my Lord :
 Make Thou my spirit pure and clear
 As are the frosty skies,
 Or this first snowdrop of the year
 That in my bosom lies.

As these white robes are soil'd and dark,
 To yonder shining ground ;
 As this pale taper's earthly spark,
 To yonder argent round ;
 So shows my soul before the Lamb,
 My spirit before Thee ;
 So in mine earthly house I am, c
 To that I hope to be.
 Break up the heavens, O Lord ! and far,
 Thro' all yon starlight keen,
 Draw me, thy bride, a glittering star,
 In raiment white and clean.

He lifts me to the golden doors ;
 The flashes come and go ;
 All heaven bursts her starry floors,
 And strows her lights below,
 And deepens on and up ! the gates
 Roll back, and far within
 For me the Heavenly Bridegroom waits,
 To make me pure of sin.

The sabbaths of Eternity,
One sabbath deep and wide—
A'light upon the shining sea—
The Bridegroom with his bride!

Sir Galahad

(1842)

My good blade carves the casques of men,
My tough lance thrusteth sure,
My strength is as the strength of ten,
Because my heart is pure.
The shattering trumpet shrilleth high,
The hard brands shiver on the steel,
The splinter'd spear-shafts crack and fly,
The horse and rider reel :
They reel, they roll in clanging lists,
And when the tide of combat stands,
Perfume and flowers fall in showers,
That lightly rain from ladies' hands.

How sweet are looks that ladies bend
On whom their favours fall !
For them I battle till the end,
To save from shame and thrall :
But all my heart is drawn above,
My knees are bow'd in crypt and shrine :
I never felt the kiss of love,
Nor maiden's hand in mine.
More bounteous aspects on me beam,
Me mightier transports move and thrill ;
So keep I fair thro' faith and prayer
A virgin heart in work and will.

When down the stormy crescent goes,
A light before me swims,
Between dark stems the forest glows,
I hear a noise of hymns :

Then by some secret shrine I ride ;
 I hear a voice but none are there ;
 The stalls are void, the doors are wide,
 The tapers burning fair.
 Fair gleams the snowy altar-cloth,
 The silver vessels sparkle clean,
 The shrill bell rings, the censer swings,
 And solemn chaunts resound between.

Sometimes on lonely mountain-meres
 I find a magic bark ;
 I leap on board : no helmsman steers :
 I float till all is dark.
 A gentle sound, an awful light !
 Three angels bear the holy Grail :
 With folded feet, in stoles of white,
 On sleeping wings they sail.
 Ah, blessed vision ! blood of God !
 My spirit beats her mortal bars,
 As down dark tides the glory slides,
 And star-like mingles with the stars.

When on my goodly charger borne,
 Thro' dreaming towns I go,
 The cock crows ere the Christmas morn,
 The streets are dumb with snow.
 The tempest crackles on the leads,
 And, ringing, springs from brand and mail ;
 But o'er the dark a glory spreads,
 And gilds the driving hail.
 I leave the plain, I climb the height ;
 No branchy thicket shelter yields ;
 But blessed forms in whistling storms
 Fly o'er waste fens and windy fields.

A maiden knight—to me is given
 Such hope, I know not fear ;
 I yearn to breathe the airs of heaven
 That often meet me here.

I muse on joy that will not cease,
 Pure spaces clothed in living beams,
 Pure lilies of eternal peace,
 Whose odours haunt my dreams ;
 And, stricken by an angel's hand,
 This mortal armour that I wear,
 This weight and size, this heart and eyes,
 Are touch'd, are turn'd to finest air.

The clouds are broken in the sky,
 And thro' the mountain-walls
 A rolling organ-harmony
 Swells up, and shakes and falls.
 Then move the trees, the copses nod,
 Wings flutter, voices hover clear :
 ' O just and faithful knight of God !
 Ride on ! the prize is near.'
 So pass I hostel, hall, and grange ;
 By bridge and ford, by park and pale,
 All-arm'd I ride, whate'er betide,
 Until I find the holy Grail.

From 'The Lotos Eaters'

(1842)

I

There is sweet music here that softer falls
 Than petals from blown roses on the grass,
 Or night-dews on still waters between walls
 Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass ;
 Music that gentlier on the spirit lies,
 Than tir'd eyelids upon tir'd eyes ;
 Music that brings sweet sleep down from the blissful
 skies.

Here are cool mosses deep,
 And thro' the moss the ivies creep,
 And in the stream the long-leaved flowers weep,
 And from the craggy ledge the poppy hangs in sleep.

VI

Dear is the memory of our wedded lives,
 And dear the last embraces of our wives
 And their warm tears : but all hath suffer'd change :
 For surely now our household hearths are cold :
 Our sons inherit us : our looks are strange :
 And we should come like ghosts to trouble joy.
 Or else the island princes over-bold
 Have eat our substance, and the minstrel sings
 Before them of the ten years' war in Troy,
 And our great deeds, as half-forgotten things.
 Is there confusion in the little isle ?
 Let what is broken so remain.
 The Gods are hard to reconcile :
 'Tis hard to settle order once again.
 There is confusion worse than death,
 Trouble on trouble, pain on pain,
 Long labour unto aged breath,
 Sore task to hearts worn out by many wars
 And eyes grown dim with gazing on the pilot-stars.

VIII

The Lotos blooms below the barren peak :
 The Lotos blows by every winding creek :
 All day the wind breathes low with mellow tone :
 Thro' every hollow cave and alley lone
 Round and round the spicy downs the yellow Lotos-
 dust is blown.
 We have had enough of action, and of motion we,
 Roll'd to starboard, roll'd to larboard, when the surge
 was seething free,
 Where the wallowing monster spouted his foam-foun-
 tains in the sea.
 Let us swear an oath, and keep it with an equal mind,
 In the hollow Lotos-land to live and lie reclined
 On the hills like Gods together, careless of mankind.
 For they lie beside their^o nectar, and the bolts are hurl'd

Far below them in the valleys, and the clouds are lightly
curl'd

Round their golden houses, girdled with the gleaming
world :

Where they smile in secret, looking over wasted lands,
Blight and famine, plague and earthquake, roaring deeps
and fiery sands,

Clanging fights, and flaming towns, and sinking ships,
and praying hands.

But they smile, they find a music centred in a doleful
song

Steaming up, a lamentation and an ancient tale of wrong,
Like a tale of little meaning tho' the words are strong ;
Chanted from an ill-used race of men that cleave the
soil,

Sow the seed, and reap the harvest with enduring toil,
Storing yearly little dues of wheat, and wine and oil ;
Till they perish and they suffer—some, 'tis whisper'd
—down in hell

Suffer endless anguish, others in Elysian valleys dwell,
Resting weary limbs at last on beds of asphodel.

Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet than toil, the
shore

Than labour in the deep mid-ocean, wind and wave and
oar ;

Oh rest ye, brother mariners, we will not wander more.

Ulysses

(1842)

It little profits that an idle king,
By this still hearth, among these barren crags,
Match'd with an aged wife, I mete and dole
Unequal laws unto a savage race,
That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not me.
I cannot rest from travel : I will drink
Life to the lees : all times I have enjoy'd
Greatly, have suffer'd greatly, both with those
That loved me, and alone ; on shore, and when
Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades

Vext the dim sea : I am become a name ;
 For always roaming with a hungry heart
 Much have I seen and known ; cities of men
 And manners, climates, councils, governments,
 Myself not least, but honour'd of them all ;
 And drunk delight of battle with my peers,
 Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy.
 I am a part of all that I have met ;
 Yet all experience is an arch wherethro'
 Gleams that untravell'd world, whose margin fades
 For ever and for ever when I move.
 How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
 To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in use !
 As tho' to breathe were life. Life piled on life
 Were all too little, and of one to me
 Little remains : but every hour is saved
 From that eternal silence, something more,
 A bringer of new things ; and vile it were
 For some three suns to store and hoard myself,
 And this gray spirit yearning in desire
 To follow knowledge like a sinking star,
 Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.

This is my son, mine own Telemachus,
 To whom I leave the sceptre and the isle—
 Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil
 This labour, by slow prudence to make mild
 A rugged people, and thro' soft degrees
 Subdue them to the useful and the good.
 Most blameless is he, centred in the sphere
 Of common duties, decent not to fail
 In offices of tenderness, and pay
 Meet adoration to my household gods,
 When I am gone. He works his work, I mine.

There lies the port ; the vessel puffs her sail :
 There gloom the dark broad seas. My mariners,
 Souls that have toil'd, and wrought, and thought with me—
 That ever with a frolic welcome took
 The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed

Free hearts, free foreheads—you and I are old ;
Old age hath yet his honour and his toil ;
Death closes all : but something ere the end,
Some work of noble note, may yet be done,
Not unbecoming men that strove with Gods.
The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks :
The long day wanes : the slow moon climbs : the deep
Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends,
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
Push off, and sitting well in order smite
The sounding furrows ; for my purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
Of all the western stars, until I die.
It may be that the gulfs will wash us down :
It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,
And see the great Achilles, whom we knew.
Tho' much is taken, much abides ; and tho'
We are not now that strength which in old days
Moved earth and heaven ; that which we are, we are ;
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

Of old sat Freedom on the Heights (1842)

Of old sat Freedom on the heights,
The thunders breaking at her feet :
Above her shook the starry lights :
She heard the torrents meet.

There in her place she did rejoice,
Self-gather'd in her prophet-mind,
But fragments of her mighty voice
Came rolling on the wind.

Then stept she down thro' town and field
To mingle with the human race,
And part by part to men reveal'd
The fullness of her face—

Grave mother of majestic works,
 From her isle-altar gazing down,
 Who, God-like, grasps the triple forks,
 And, King-like, wears the crown :

Her open eyes desire the truth.
 The wisdom of a thousand years
 Is in them. May perpetual youth
 Keep dry their light from tears ;

That her fair form may stand and shine,
 Make bright our days and light our dreams,
 Turning to scorn with lips divine
 The falsehood of extremes !

Break, break, break

(1842)

Break, break, break,
 On thy cold gray stones, O Sea !
 And I would that my tongue could utter
 The thoughts that arise in me.

O well for the fisherman's boy,
 That he shouts with his sister at play !
 O well for the sailor lad,
 That he sings in his boat on the bay !

And the stately ships go on
 To their haven under the hill ;
 But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand,
 And the sound of a voice that is still !

Break, break, break,
 At the foot of thy crags, O Sea !
 But the tender grace of a day that is dead
 Will never come back to me.

Stanzas from 'In Memoriam'

(1850)

Strong Son of God, immortal Love,
Whom we, that have not seen thy face,
By faith, and faith alone, embrace,
Believing where we cannot prove ;

Thine are these orbs of light and shade ;
Thou madest Life in man and brute ;
Thou madest Death ; and lo, thy foot
Is on the skull which thou hast made.

Thou wilt not leave us in the dust :
Thou madest man, he knows not why,
He thinks he was not made to die ;
And thou hast made him : thou art just.

Thou seemest human and divine,
The highest, holiest manhood, thou :
Our wills are ours, we know not how ;
Our wills are ours, to make them thine.

Our little systems have their day ;
They have their day and cease to be :
They are but broken lights of thee,
And thou, O Lord, art more than they.

We have but faith : we cannot know ;
For knowledge is of things we see ;
And yet we trust it comes from thee,
A beam in darkness : let it grow.

Let knowledge grow from more to more,
But more of reverence in us dwell ;
That mind and soul, according well,
May make one music as before,

But vaster. We are fools and slight ;
 We mock thee when we do not fear :
 But help thy foolish ones to bear ;
 Help thy vain worlds to bear thy light.

Forgive what seem'd my sin in me ;
 What seem'd my worth since I began ;
 For merit lives from man to man,
 And not from man, O Lord, to thee.

Forgive my grief for one removed,
 Thy creature, whom I found so fair.
 I trust he lives in thee, and there
 I find him worthier to be loved.

Forgive these wild and wandering cries,
 Confusions of a wasted youth ;
 Forgive them where they fail in truth,
 And in thy wisdom make me wise.

XXXVI

Tho' truths in manhood darkly join,
 Deep-seated in our mystic frame,
 We yield all blessing to the name
 Of Him that made them current coin ;

For Wisdom dealt with mortal powers,
 Where truth in closest words shall fail,
 When truth embodied in a tale
 Shall enter in at lowly doors.

And so the Word had breath, and wrought
 With human hands the creed of creeds
 In loveliness of perfect deeds,
 More strong than all poetic thought ;

Which he may read that binds the sheaf,
Or builds the house, or digs the grave,
And those wild eyes that watch the wave
In roarings round the coral reef.

LIV

Oh yet we trust that somehow good
Will be the final goal of ill,
To pangs of nature, sins of will,
Defects of doubt, and taints of blood ;

That nothing walks with aimless feet ;
That not one life shall be destroy'd,
Or cast as rubbish to the void,
When God hath made the pile complete ;

That not a worm is cloven in vain ;
That not a moth with vain desire
Is shrivell'd in a fruitless fire,
Or but subserves another's gain.

Behold, we know not anything ;
I can but trust that good shall fall
At last—far off—at last, to all,
And every winter change to spring.

So runs my dream : but what am I ?
An infant crying in the night :
An infant crying for the light :
And with no language but a cry.

LV

The wish, that of the living whole
No life may fail beyond the grave,
Derives it not from what we have
The likeliest God within the soul ?

Are God and Nature then at strife,
 That Nature lends such evil dreams ?
 So careful of the type she seems,
 So careless of the single life ;

That I, considering everywhere
 Her secret meaning in her deeds,
 And finding that of fifty seeds
 She often brings but one to bear,

I falter where I firmly trod,
 And falling with my weight of cares
 Upon the great world's altar-stairs
 That slope thro' darkness up to God,

I stretch lame hands of faith, and grope,
 And gather dust and chaff, and call
 To what I feel is Lord of all,
 And faintly trust the larger hope.

CXXVI

Love is and was my Lord and King,
 And in his presence I attend
 To hear the tidings of my friend,
 Which every hour his couriers bring.

Love is and was my King and Lord,
 And will be, tho' as yet I keep
 Within his court on earth, and sleep
 Encompass'd by his faithful guard,

And hear at times a sentinel
 Who moves about from place to place,
 And whispers to the worlds of space,
 In the deep night, that all is well.

Songs from 'The Princess'

(1850)

I

The splendour falls on castle walls
And snowy summits old in story :
The long light shakes across the lakes,
And the wild cataract leaps in glory.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
• Blow, bugle ; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O hark, O hear ! how thin and clear,
And thinner, clearer, farther going !
O sweet and far from cliff and scar
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing !
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying :
Blow, bugle ; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill or field or river :
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow for ever and for ever.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.

II

'Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean,
Tears from the depth of some divine despair
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,
In looking on the happy Autumn-fields,
And thinking of the days that are no more.

'Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail,
That brings our friends up from the underworld,
Sad as the last which reddens over one
That sinks with all we love below the verge ;
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more.

‘ Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer dawns
 The earliest pipe of half-awaken’d birds
 To dying ears, when unto dying eyes
 The casement slowly grows a glimmering square ;
 So sad, so strange, the days that are no more.

‘ Dear as remember’d kisses after death,
 And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feign’d
 On lips that are for others ; deep as love,
 Deep as first love, and wild with all regret ;
 O Death in Life, the days that are no more.’

III

Home they brought her warrior dead :
 She nor swoon’d, nor utter’d cry :
 All her maidens, watching, said,
 ‘ She must weep or she will die.’

Then they praised him, soft and low,
 Call’d him worthy to be loved,
 Truest friend and noblest foe ;
 Yet she neither spoke nor moved.

Stole a maiden from her place,
 Lightly to the warrior stept,
 Took the face-cloth from the face ;
 Yet she neither moved nor wept.

Rose a nurse of ninety years,
 Set his child upon her knee—
 Like summer tempest came her tears—
 ‘ Sweet my child, I live for thee.’

IV

Ask me no more : the moon may draw the sea ;
 The cloud may stoop from heaven and take the shape
 With fold to fold, of mountain or of cape ;
 But O too fond, when have I answer’d thee ?
 Ask me no more.

Ask me no more : what answer should I give ?

I love not hollow cheek or faded eye :

Yet, O my friend, I will not have thee die !

Ask me no more, lest I should bid thee live ;

Ask me no more.

Ask me no more : thy fate and mine are seal'd :

I strove against the stream and all in vain :

Let the great river take me to the main :

No more, dear love, for at a touch I yield ;

Ask me no more.

The Charge of the Light Brigade

(1854)

Half a league, half a league,

Half a league onward,

All in the valley of Death

Rode the six hundred.

'Forward, the Light Brigade !

Charge for the guns !' he said :

Into the valley of Death

Rode the six hundred.

'Forward, the Light Brigade !'

Was there a man dismay'd ?

Not tho' the soldier knew

Some one had blundered :

Their's not to make reply,

Their's not to reason why,

Their's but to do and die :

Into the valley of Death

Rode the six hundred.

Cannon to right of them,

Cannon to left of them,

Cannon in front of them

Volley'd and thunder'd ;

Storm'd at with shot and shell,
 Boldly they rode and well,
 Into the jaws of Death,
 Into the mouth of Hell
 Rode the six hundred.

Flash'd all their sabres bare,
 Flash'd as they turn'd in air
 Sabring the gunners there,
 Charging an army, while
 All the world wonder'd :
 Plunged in the battery-smoke
 Right thro' the line they broke ;
 Cossack and Russian
 Reel'd from the sabre-stroke
 Shatter'd and sunder'd.
 Then they rode back, but not
 Not the six hundred.

Cannon to right of them,
 Cannon to left of them,
 Cannon behind them
 Volley'd and thunder'd ;
 Storm'd at with shot and shell,
 While horse and hero fell,
 They that had fought so well
 Came thro' the jaws of Death,
 Back from the mouth of Hell,
 All that was left of them,
 Left of six hundred.

When can their glory fade ?
 O the wild charge they made !
 All the world wonder'd.
 Honour the charge they made !
 Honour the Light Brigade,
 Noble six hundred !

Will (Stanza I)

O well for him whose will is strong !
He suffers, but he will not suffer long ;
He suffers, but he cannot suffer wrong :
For him nor moves the loud world's random mock,
Nor all Calamity's hugest waves confound,
Who seems a promontory of rock,
That, compass'd round with turbulent sound,
In middle ocean meets the surging shock,
Tempest-buffeted, citadel-crown'd.

From 'Maud'

(1855)

1.

See what a lovely shell,
Small and pure as a pearl,
Lying close to my foot,
Frail, but a work divine,
Made so fairly well
With delicate spire and whorl,
How exquisitely minute,
A miracle of design !

What is it ? a learned man
Could give it a clumsy name.
Let him name it who can,
The beauty would be the same.

The tiny cell is forlorn,
Void of the little living will
That made it stir on the shore.
Did he stand at the diamond door
Of his house in a rainbow frill ?
Did he push, when he was uncurl'd,
A golden foot or a fairy horn
Thro' his dim water-world ?

IV

Poet of the happy Tityrus
 piping underneath his beechen bowers ;
 Poet of the poet-satyr
 whom the laughing shepherd bound with flowers ;

V

Chanter of the Pollio, glorying
 in the blissful years again to be,
 Summers of the snakeless meadow,
 unlaborious earth and oarless sea ;

VI

Thou that seëst Universal
 Nature moved by Universal Mind ;
 Thou majestic in thy sadness
 at the doubtful doom of human kind ;

VII

Light among the vanish'd ages ;
 star that gildest yet this phantom shore ;
 Golden branch amid the shadows,
 kings and realms that pass to rise no more ;

VIII

Now thy Forum roars no longer,
 fallen every purple Cæsar's dome—
 Tho' thine ocean-roll of rhythm
 sound for ever of Imperial Rome—

IX

Now the Rome of slaves hath perish'd,
 and the Rome of freemen holds her place,
 I, from out the Northern Island
 sunder'd once from all the human race,

X

I salute thee, Mantovano,
I that loved thee since my day began,
Wielder of the stateliest measure
ever moulded by the lips of man.

Crossing the Bar (1889)

Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me !
And may there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea,

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark !
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark ;

For tho' from^out our bourne of Time and Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crost the bar.

ROBERT BROWNING

He wrote reams of verse which are not poetry, though poetry is always struggling through. He seems to have been little aware of its absence, and in this he is like Chapman and many a good Elizabethan. . . . But all this is only to say that Browning's mental force and alertness outrange, as so often happens with Englishmen of genius, his artistic power. . . .

In the region of ideal aspiration we must seek for his power. . . . Luckily it is here too that he is most of a poet ; and when he is once fairly on his way few have equalled him in sureness

and nobility of style. His execution, at its best, does not fall behind—it is worthy of—his energetic spirit of faith and courage. . . . And he is always best when he *chants* his sermon. Start with Browning where we will, we are apt to come back at last to his lyrical gift. . . .

As to his whole body of performance, we may look on it as on some metal-worker's or lapidary's store, stocked with rubies and chrysolites of the best, and with rings and armlets 'justifiably golden,' and also with the same things half-wrought and ill set, and again with 'cradles' of the unwashed, gold-containing rubble; one and all being paraded, as if they wore the regalia, with a queer unconsciousness of difference.—(*Survey*, i. 394, 395, 397.)

Song from 'Paracelsus' (1835)

Heap cassia, sandal-buds and stripes
Of labdanum,¹ and aloe-balls,
Smeared with dull nard an Indian wipes
From out her hair: such balsam falls
Down sea-side mountain pedestals,
From tree-tops where tired winds are fain,
Spent with the vast and howling main,
To treasure half their island-gain.

And strew faint sweetness from some old
Egyptian's fine worm-eaten shroud
Which breaks to dust when once unrolled;
Or shredded perfume, like a cloud
From closet long to quiet vowed,
With moth'd and dropping arras hung,
Mouldering her lute and books among,
As when a queen, long dead, was young.

Pippa's Song

(From *Pippa Passes*) (1841)

The year's at the spring
And day's at the morn;
Morning's at seven;
The hill-side's dew-pearled;

¹ A fragrant gum.

The lark's on the wing ;
 The snail's on the thorn :
 . God's in his heaven—
 All's right with the world !

**How they brought the good news from Ghent
 to Aix** (1845)

I

I sprang to the stirrup, and Joris, and he ;
 I galloped, Dirck galloped, we galloped all three ;
 ' Good speed ! ' cried the watch, as the gate-bolts un-
 drew ;
 ' Speed ! ' echoed the wall to us galloping through ;
 Behind shut the postern, the lights sank to rest,
 And into the midnight we galloped abreast.

II

Not a word to each other ; we kept the great pace ;
 Neck by neck, stride by stride, never changing our place
 I turned in my saddle and made its girths tight,
 Then shortened each stirrup, and set the pique right,
 Rebuckled the cheek-strap, chained slacker the bit,
 Nor galloped less steadily Roland a whit.

III

'Twas moonset at starting ; but while we drew near
 Lokeren, the cocks crew and twilight dawned clear ;
 At Boom, a great yellow star came out to see ;
 At Düffeld, 'twas morning as plain as could be ;
 And from Mecheln church-steeple we heard the half-
 chime,
 So, Joris broke silence with, ' Yet there is time ! '

IV

At Aerschot, up leaped of a sudden the sun,
 And against him the cattle stood black every one,

To stare thro' the mist at us galloping past,
 And I saw my stout galloper Roland at last,
 With resolute shoulders, each butting away
 The haze, as some bluff river headland its spray :

V

And his low head and crest, just one sharp ear bent
 back
 For my voice, and the other pricked out on his track ;
 And one eye's black intelligence,—ever that glance
 O'er its white edge at me, his own master, askance !
 And the thick heavy spume-flakes which aye and anon
 His fierce lips shook upwards in galloping on.

VI

By Hasselt, Dirck groaned ; and cried Joris, ' Stay spur !
 ' Your Roos galloped bravely, the fault's not in her,
 ' We'll remember at Aix '—for one heard the quick
 wheeze
 Of her chest, saw the stretched neck and staggering
 knees,
 And sunk tail, and horrible heave of the flank,
 As down on her haunches she shuddered and sank.

VII

So, we were left galloping, Joris and I,
 Past Looz and past Tongres, no cloud in the sky ;
 The broad sun above laughed a pitiless laugh,
 ' Neath our feet broke the brittle bright stubble like
 chaff ;
 Till over by Dalhem a dome-spire sprang white,
 And ' Gallop,' gasped Joris, ' for Aix is in sight ! '

VIII

' How they'll greet us ! '—and all in a moment his roan
 Rolled neck and croup over, lay dead as a stone ;
 And there was my Roland to bear the whole weight
 Of the news which alone could save Aix from her fate,

With his nostrils like pits full of blood to the brim,
And with circles of red for his eye-sockets' rim.

IX

Then I cast loose my buffcoat, each holster let fall,
Shook off both my jack-boots, let go belt and all,
Stood up in the stirrup, leaned, patted his ear,
Called my Roland his pet-name, my horse without
peer ;
Clapped my hands, laughed and sang, any noise, bad
or good,
Till at length into Aix Roland galloped and stood.

X

And all I remember is—friends flocking round
As I sat with his head 'twixt my knees on the ground ;
And no voice but was praising this Roland of mine,
As I poured down his throat our last measure of wine,
Which (the burgesses voted by common consent)
Was no more than his due who brought good news from
Ghent.

The Lost Leader

(1845)

I

Just for a handful of silver he left us,
Just for a riband to stick in his coat—
Found the one gift of which fortune bereft us,
Lost all the others she lets us devote ;
They, with the gold to give, doled him out silver,
So much was theirs who so little allowed :
How all our copper had gone for his service !
Rags—were they purple, his heart had been proud !
We that had loved him so, followed him, honoured him,
Lived in his mild and magnificent eye,
Learned his great language, caught his clear accents,
Made him our pattern to live and to die !

Shakespeare was of us, Milton was for us,
 Burns, Shelley, were with us,—they watch from their
 graves !
 He alone breaks from the van and the freemen,
 —He alone sinks to the rear and the slaves !

II

We shall march prospering,—not thro' his presence ;
 Songs may inspirit us,—not from his lyre ;
 Deeds will be done,—while he boasts his quiescence,
 Still bidding crouch whom the rest bade aspire :
 Blot out his name, record one lost soul more,
 One task more declined, one more footpath untrod
 One more devil's-triumph and sorrow for angels,
 One wrong more to man, one more insult to God !
 Life's night begins : let him never come back to us !
 There would be doubt, hesitation and pain,
 Forced praise on our part—the glimmer of twilight,
 Never glad confident morning again !
 Best fight on well, for we taught him—strike gallantly
 Menace our heart ere we master his own ;
 Then let him receive the new knowledge and wait us
 Pardoned in heaven, the first by the throne !

Home Thoughts, from Abroad (1845)

I

Oh, to be in England
 Now that April's there,
 And whoever wakes in England
 Sees, some morning, unaware,
 That the lowest boughs and the brushwood sheaf
 Round the elm-tree bole are in tiny leaf,
 While the chaffinch sings on the orchard bough
 In England—now !

II

And after April, when May follows,
 And the whitethroat builds, and all the swallows !
 Hark, where my blossomed pear-tree in the hedge
 Leans to the field and scatters on the clover
 Blossoms and dewdrops—at the bent spray's edge—
 That's the wise thrush ; he sings each song twice over,
 Lest you should think he never could recapture
 The first fine careless rapture !
 And though the fields look rough with hoary dew,
 All will be gay when noontide wakes anew
 The buttercups, the little children's dower
 —Far brighter than this gaudy melon-flower !

Love among the Ruins

(1855)

I

Where the quiet-coloured end of evening smiles,
 Miles and miles
 On the solitary pastures where our sheep
 Half-asleep
 Tinkle homeward thro' the twilight, stray or stop
 As they crop—
 Was the site once of a city great and gay,
 (So they say)
 Of our country's very capital, its prince
 Ages since
 Held his court in, gathered councils, wielding far
 Peace or war.

II

Now,—the country does not even boast a tree,
 As you see,
 To distinguish slopes of verdure, certain rills
 From the hills
 Intersect and give a name to, (else they run
 Into one)

58 A CENTURY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE—III

Where the domed and daring palace shot its spires
Up like fires
O'er the hundred-gated circuit of a wall
Bounding all,
Made of marble, men might march on nor be pressed,
Twelve abreast.

III

And such plenty and perfection, see, of grass
Never was !
Such a carpet as, this summer-time, o'erspreads
And embeds
Every vestige of the city, guessed alone,
Stock or stone—
Where a multitude of men breathed joy and woe
Long ago ;
Lust of glory pricked their hearts up, dread of shame
Struck them tame ;
And that glory and that shame alike, the gold
Bought and sold.

IV

Now,—the single little turret that remains
On the plains,
By the caper overrooted, by the gourd
Overscored,
While the patching houseleek's head of blossom winks
Through the chinks—
Marks the basement whence a tower in ancient time
Sprang sublime,
And a burning ring, all round, the chariots traced
As they raced,
And the monarch and his minions and his dames
Viewed the games.

V

And I know, while thus the quiet-coloured eve
Smiles to leave

To their folding, all our many-tinkling fleece
 In such peace,
And the slopes and rills in undistinguished grey
 Melt away—
That a girl with eager eyes and yellow hair
 Waits me there
In the turret whence the charioteers caught soul
 For the goal,
When the king looked, where she looks now, breathless
 dumb
 Till I come.

VI

But he looked upon the city, every side,
 Far and wide,
All the mountains topped with temples, all the glades
 Colonnades,
All the causeys, bridges, aqueducts,—and then,
 All the men !
When I do come, she will speak not, she will stand,
 Either hand
On my shoulder, give her eyes the first embrace
 Of my face,
Ere we rush, ere we extinguish sight and speech
 Each on each.

VII

In one year they sent a million fighters forth
 South and North,
And they built their gods a brazen pillar high
 As the sky,
Yet reserved a thousand chariots in full force—
 Gold, of course.
Oh heart ! oh blood that freezes, blood that burns !
 Earth's returns
For whole centuries of folly, noise and sin !
 Shut them in,
With their triumphs and their glories and the rest !
 Love is best. "

A Grammarian's Funeral

(1855)

Shortly after the Revival of Learning in Europe

Let us begin and carry up this corpse,
 Singing together.
 Leave we the common crofts, the vulgar thorpes
 Each in its tether
 Sleeping safe on the bosom of the plain,
 Cared-for till cock-crow :
 Look out if yonder be not day again
 Rimming the rock-row !
 That's the appropriate country ; there, man's thought,
 Rarer, intenser,
 Self-gathered for an outbreak, as it ought,
 Chafes in the censer.
 Leave we the unlettered plain its herd and crop ;
 Seek we sepulture
 On a tall mountain, citied to the top,
 Crowded with culture !
 All the peaks soar, but one the rest excels ;
 Clouds overcome it ;
 No ! yonder sparkle is the citadel's
 Circling its summit.
 Thither our path lies ; wind we up the heights :
 Wait ye the warning ?
 Our low life was the level's and the night's ;
 He's for the morning.
 Step to a tune, square chests, erect each head,
 'Ware the beholders !
 This is our master, famous, calm, and dead,
 Borne on our shoulders.

 Sleep, crop and herd ! sleep, darkling thorpe and croft,
 Safe from the weather !
 He, whom we convoy to his grave aloft,
 Singing together,

He was a man born with thy face and throat,
Lyric Apollo !
Long he lived nameless : how should spring take note
Winter would follow ?
Till lo, the little touch, and youth was gone !
Cramped and diminished,
Moaned he, ' New measures, other feet anon !
' My dance is finished ? '
No, that's the world's way : (keep the mountain-side,
Make for the city !)
He knew the signal, and stepped on with pride
Over men's pity ;
Left play for work, and grappled with the world
Bent on escaping :
' What's in the scroll,' quoth he, ' thou keepest furled ?
' Show me their shaping,
' Theirs who most studied man, the bard and sage,—
' Give ! '—So, he gowned him,
Straight got by heart that book to its last page :
Learned, we found him.
Yea, but we found him bald too, eyes like lead,
Accents uncertain :
' Time to taste life,' another would have said,
' Up with the curtain ! '
This man said rather, ' Actual life comes next ?
' Patience a moment !
' Grant I have mastered learning's crabbed text,
' Still there's the comment.
' Let me know all ! Prate not of most or least,
' Painful or easy !
' Even to the crumbs I'd fain eat up the feast,
' Ay, nor feel queasy.'
Oh, such a life as he resolved to live,
When he had learned it,
When he had gathered all books had to give !
Sooner, he spurned it.
Image the whole, then execute the parts—
Fancy the fabric^a

Quite, ere you build, ere steel strike fire from quartz,
Ere mortar dab brick !

(Here's the town-gate reached : there's the market-
place

Gaping before us.)

Yea, this in him was the peculiar grace

(Hearten our chorus !)

That before living he'd learn how to live—

No end to learning :

Earn the means first—God surely will contrive

Use for our earning.

Others mistrust and say, ' But time escapes :

' Live now or never ! '

He said, ' What's time ? Leave Now for dogs and apes !

' Man has Forever.'

Back to his book then : deeper drooped his head :

Calculus racked him :

Leaden before, his eyes grew dross of lead :

Tussis attacked him.

' Now, master, take a little rest ! '—not he !

(Caution redoubled,

Step two abreast, the way winds narrowly !)

Not a whit troubled

Back to his studies, fresher than at first,

Fierce as a dragon

He (soul-hydroptic with a sacred thirst)

Sucked at the flagon.

Oh, if we draw a circle premature,

Heedless of far gain,

Greedy for quick returns of profit, sure

Bad is our bargain !

Was it not great ? did not he throw on God,

(He loves the burthen)—

God's task to make the heavenly period

Perfect the earthen ?

Did not he magnify the mind, show clear

Just what it all meant ?

He would not discount life, as fools do here,
 Paid by instalment.
 He ventured neck or nothing—heaven's success
 Found, or earth's failure :
 ' Wilt thou trust death or not ? ' He answered ' Yes :
 ' Hence with life's pale lure ! '

That low man seeks a little thing to do,
 Sees it and does it :
 This high man, with a great thing to pursue,
 Dies ere he knows it.

That low man goes on adding one to one,
 His hundred's soon hit :
 This high man, aiming at a million,
 Misses an unit.

That, has the world here—should he need the next,
 Let the world mind him !
 This, throws himself on God, and unperplexed
 Seeking shall find him.

So, with the throttling hands of death at strife,
 Ground he at grammar ;
 Still, thro' the rattle, parts of speech were rife :
 While he could stammer

He settled *Hoti's* business—let it be !—
 Properly based *Oun*—
 Gave us the doctrine of the enclitic *De*,
 Dead from the waist down.

Well, here's the platform, here's the proper place :
 Hail to your purlieus,
 All ye highfliers of the feathered race,
 Swallows and curlews !

Here's the top-peak ; the multitude below
 Live, for they can, there :
 This man decided not to Live but Know—
 Bury this man there ?

Here—here's his place, where meteors shoot, clouds form,
 Lightnings are loosened,
 Stars come and go ! Let joy break with the storm,
 Peace let the dew send !

Lofty designs must close in like effects :

Loftily lying,

Leave him—still loftier than the world suspects,

Living and dying.

Abt Vogler

(1864)

*(After he has been extemporizing upon the musical
instrument of his invention)*

I

Would that the structure brave, the manifold music I
build,

Bidding my organ obey, calling its keys to their work,
Claiming each slave of the sound, at a touch, as when
Solomon willed

Armies of angels that soar, legions of demons that lurk,
Man, brute, reptile, fly,—alien of end and of aim,
Adverse, each from the other heaven-high, hell-deep
removed,—

Should rush into sight at once as he named the ineffable
Name,

And pile him a palace straight, to pleasure the princess
he loved !

II

Would it might tarry like his, the beautiful building of
mine,

This which my keys in a crowd pressed and impor-
tuned to raise !

Ah, one and all, how they helped, would dispart now
and now combine,

Zealous to hasten the work, heighten their master his
praise !

And one would bury his brow with a blind plunge down
to hell,

Burrow awhile and build, broad on the roots of things,
Then up again swim into sight, having based me my
palace well,

Founded it, fearless of flame, flat on the nether springs.

III

And another would mount and march, like the excellent minion he was,
 Ay, another and yet another, one crowd but with many a crest,
 Raising my rampired walls of gold as transparent as glass,
 Eager to do and die, yield each his place to the rest :
 For higher still and higher (as a runner tips with fire,
 When a great illumination surprises a festal night—
 Outlining round and round Rome's dome from space to spire)
 Up, the pinnacled glory reached, and the pride of my soul was in sight.

IV

In sight ? Not half ! for it seemed, it was certain, to match man's birth,
 Nature in turn conceived, obeying an impulse as I ;
 And the emulous heaven yearned down, made effort to reach the earth,
 As the earth had done her best, in my passion, to scale the sky :
 Novel splendours burst forth, grew familiar and dwelt with mine,
 Not a point nor peak but found and fixed its wandering star ;
 Meteor-moons, balls of blaze : and they did not pale nor pine,
 For earth had attained to heaven, there was no more near nor far.

V

Nay more ; for there wanted not who walked in the glare and glow,
 Presences plain in the place ; or, fresh from the Protoplast, ,

Furnished for ages to come, when a kindlier wind should
blow,

Lured now to begin and live, in a house, to their
liking at last ;

Or else the wonderful Dead who have passed through
the body and gone,

But were back once more to breathe in an old world
worth their new :

What never had been, was now ; what was, as it shall
be anon ;

And what is,—shall I say, matched both ? for I was
made perfect too.

VI

All through my keys that gave their sounds to a wish
of my soul,

All through my soul that praised as its wish flowed
visibly forth,

All through music and me ! For think, had I painted
the whole,

Why, there it had stood, to see, nor the process so
wonder-worth :

Had I written the same, made verse—still, effect pro-
ceeds from cause,

Ye know why the forms are fair, ye hear how the
tale is told ;

It is all triumphant art, but art in obedience to laws,
Painter and poet are proud in the artist-list enrolled :—

VII

But here is the finger of God, a flash of the will that
can,

Existent behind all laws, that made them and, lo,
they are !

And I know not if, save in this, such gift be allowed
to man,

That out of three sounds he frame, not a fourth
sound, but a star.

Consider it well : each tone of our scale in itself is
nought ;
It is everywhere in the world—loud, soft, and all is
said :
Give it to me to use ! I mix it with two in my thought :
And, there ! Ye have heard and seen : consider and
bow the head !

VIII

Well, it is gone at last, the palace of music I reared ;
Gone ! and the good tears start, the praises that come
too slow ;
For one is assured at first, one scarce can say that he
feared,
That he even gave it a thought, the gone thing was
to go.
Never to be again ! But many more of the kind
As good, nay, better perchance : is this your com-
fort to me ?
To me, who must be saved because I cling with my mind
To the same, same self, same love, same God : ay,
what was, shall be.

IX

Therefore to whom turn I but to thee, the ineffable
Name ?
Builder and maker, thou, of houses not made with
hands !
What, have fear of change from thee who art ever the
same ?
Doubt that thy power can fill the heart that thy
power expands ?
There shall never be one lost good ! What was, shall
live as before ;
The evil is null, is nought, is silence implying sound ;
What was good shall be good, with, for evil, so much
good more ;
On the earth the broken arcs ; in the heaven, a per-
fect round.°

X

All we have willed or hoped or dreamed of good shall
 exist ;
 Not its semblance, but itself ; no beauty, nor good,
 nor power
 Whose voice has gone forth, but each survives for the
 melodist
 When eternity affirms the conception of an hour.
 The high that proved too high, the heroic for earth too
 hard,
 The passion that left the ground to lose itself in the
 sky,
 Are music sent up to God by the lover and the bard ;
 Enough that he heard it once : we shall hear it by-
 and-by.

XI

And what is our failure here but a triumph's evidence
 For the fulness of the days ? Have we withered or
 agonized ?
 Why else was the pause prolonged but that singing
 might issue thence ?
 Why rushed the discords in but that harmony should
 be prized ?
 Sorrow is hard to bear, and doubt is slow to clear,
 Each sufferer says his say, his scheme of the weal
 and woe :
 But God has a few of us whom he whispers in the ear ;
 The rest may reason and welcome : 'tis we musicians
 know.

XII

Well, it is earth with me ; silence resumes her reign :
 I will be patient and proud, and soberly acquiesce.
 Give me the keys. I feel for the common chord again,
 Sliding by semitones, till I sink to the minor,—
 yes,

And I blunt it into a ninth, and I stand on alien ground,
Surveying awhile the heights I rolled from into the
deep ;
Which, hark, I have dared and done, for my resting-
place is found,
The C Major of this life : so, now I will try to sleep.

Hervé Riel

(1871)

I

On the sea and at the Hogue, sixteen hundred ninety-
two,
Did the English fight the French,—woe to France !
And, the thirty-first of May, helter-skelter through the
blue,
Like a crowd of frightened porpoises a shoal of sharks
pursue,
Came crowding ship on ship to Saint-Malo on the
Rance,
With the English fleet in view.

II

'Twas the squadron that escaped, with the victor in
full chase ;
First and foremost of the drove, in his great ship,
Damfreville ;
Close on him fled, great and small,
Twenty-two good ships in all ;
And they signalled to the place
'Help the winners of a race !
Get us guidance, give us harbour, take us quick—or,
quicker still,
Here's the English can and will !'

III

Then the pilots of the place put out brisk and leapt on
board ;
'Why, what hope or chance have ships like these to
pass ?' laughed they :

'Rocks to starboard, rocks to port, all the passage
 scarred and scored,—
 Shall the "Formidable" here, with her twelve and
 eighty guns,
 Think to make the river-mouth by the single narrow
 way,
 Trust to enter—where 'tis ticklish for a craft of twenty
 tons,
 And with flow at full beside?
 Now, 'tis slackest ebb of tide.
 Reach the mooring? Rather say
 While rock stands or water runs,
 Not a ship will leave the bay!'

IV

Then was called a council straight.
 Brief and bitter the debate:
 'Here's the English at our heels; would you have them
 take in tow
 All that's left us of the fleet, linked together stern and
 bow,
 For a prize to Plymouth Sound?
 Better run the ships aground!'
 (Ended Damfreville his speech).
 'Not a minute more to wait!
 Let the Captains all and each
 Shove ashore, then blow up, burn the vessels on the
 beach!
 France must undergo her fate.

V

Give the word!' But no such word
 Was ever spoke or heard;
 For up stood, for out stepped, for in struck amid all
 these
 —A Captain? A Lieutenant? A Mate—first, second,
 third?

No such man of mark, and meet
 With his betters to compete !
 But a simple Breton sailor pressed by Tourville for
 the fleet,
 A poor coasting-pilot he, Hervé Riel the Croisickese.¹

VI

And 'What mockery or malice have we here ?' cries
 Hervé Riel :
 'Are you mad, you Malouins ?² Are you cowards,
 fools, or rogues ?
 Talk to me of rocks and shoals, me who took the sound-
 ings, tell
 On my fingers every bank, every shallow, every swell
 'Twixt the offing here and Grève where the river dis-
 embogues ?
 Are you bought by English gold ? Is it love the lying's
 for ?
 Morn and eve, night and day,
 Have I piloted your bay,
 Entered free and anchored fast at the foot of Solidor.
 Burn the fleet and ruin France ? That were worse
 than fifty Hagues !
 Sirs, they know I speak the truth ! Sirs, believe
 me there's a way !
 Only let me lead the line,
 Have the biggest ship to steer,
 Get this "Formidable" clear,
 Make the others follow mine,
 And I lead them, most and least, by a passage I know well.
 Right to Solidor past Grève,
 And there lay them safe and sound ;
 And if one ship misbehave,—
 —Keel so much as grate the ground,
 Why, I've nothing but my life,—here's my head !' cries
 Hervé Riel.

¹ Native of Le Croisic, a village at the mouth of the Loire.

² Natives of St. Malo.

VII

Not a minute more to wait.

'Steer us in, then, small and great !

Take the helm, lead the line, save the squadron !'
cried its chief.

Captains, give the sailor place !

He is Admiral, in brief.

Still the north-wind, by God's grace,

See the noble fellow's face

As the big ship, with a bound,

Clears the entry like a hound,

Keeps the passage, as its inch of way were the wide
sea's profound !

See, safe thro' shoal and rock,

How they follow in a flock,

Not a ship that misbehaves, not a keel that grates the
ground,

Not a spar that comes to grief !

The peril, see, is past,

All are harboured to the last,

And just as Hervé Riel hollas 'Anchor !'—sure as fate,
Up the English come,—too late !

VIII

So, the storm subsides to calm :

They see the green trees wave

On the heights o'erlooking Grève.

Hearts that bled are stanch'd with balm.

'Just our rapture to enhance,

Let the English rake the bay,

Gnash their teeth and glare askance

As they cannonade away !

'Neath rampired Solidor pleasant riding on the Rance !'

How hope succeeds despair on each Captain's coun-
tenance !

Out burst all with one accord,

'This is Paradise for Hell !

Let France, let France's King
Thank the man that did the thing !'
What a shout, and all one word,
'Hervé Riel !'
As he stepped in front once more,
Not a symptom of surprise
In the frank blue Breton eyes,
Just the same man as before.

IX

Then said Damfreville, 'My friend,
I must speak out at the end,
Though I find the speaking hard.
Praise is deeper than the lips :
You have saved the King his ships,
You must name your own reward.
'Faith, our sun was near eclipse !
Demand whate'er you will,
France remains your debtor still.
Ask to heart's content and have ! or my name's not
Damfreville.'

X

Then a beam^s of fun outbroke
On the bearded mouth that spoke,
As the honest heart laughed through
Those frank eyes of Breton blue :
'Since I needs must say my say,
Since on board the duty's done,
And from Malo Roads to Croisic Point, what is it
but a run ?—
Since 'tis ask and have, I may—
Since the others go ashore—
Come ! A good whole holiday !
Leave to go and see my wife, whom I call the Belle
Aurore !'
That he asked and that he got,—nothing more.

XI

Name and deed alike are lost :

Not a pillar nor a post

In his Croisic keeps alive the feat as it befell ;

Not a head in white and black

On a single fishing-smack,

In memory of the man but for whom had gone to wrack

All that France saved from the fight whence England
bore the bell.

Go to Paris : rank on rank

Search the heroes flung pell-mell

On the Louvre, face and flank !

You shall look long enough ere you come to Hervé
Riel.

So, for better and for worse,

Hervé Riel, accept my verse !

In my verse, Hervé Riel, do thou once more

Save the squadron, honour France, love thy wife the
Belle Aurore !

Epilogue to 'Asolando'

(1889)

At the midnight in the silence of the sleep-time,

When you set your fancies free,

Will they pass to where—by death, fools think, im-
prisoned—

Low he lies who once so loved you, whom you loved so,
—Pity me ?

Oh to love so, be so loved, yet so mistaken !

What had I on earth to do

With the slothful, with the mawkish, the unmanly ?

Like the aimless, helpless, hopeless, did I drivel

—Being—who ?

One who never turned his back but marched breast
forward,

Never doubted clouds would break,

Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would
triumph,
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
Sleep to wake.

No, at noonday in the bustle of man's worktime
Greet the unseen with a cheer!
Bid him forward, breast and back as either should be,
'Strive and thrive!' cry 'Speed,—fight on, fare ever
There as here!'

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

There have been few good poetesses at any time or in any country. Amongst those who have written in English, it is equally certain that Mrs. Browning is not the surest artist and that she has 'the largest and most comprehensive soul.' . . . If Mrs. Browning had written more things like the *Sonnets from the Portuguese* she might have ranked with a poet like Rossetti. . . . Whatever their flaws, the *Sonnets from the Portuguese* stand, by right of subject, occasion, and temper, and frequently by right of workmanship, apart from all other English sonnet series and above most of them.—(*Survey*, i. 399, 403.)

The Sleep (1838)

Of all the thoughts of God that are
Borne inward unto souls afar,
Along the Psalmist's music deep,
Now tell me if that any is,
For gift of grace, surpassing this—
'He giveth His beloved, sleep'?

What would we give to our beloved?
The hero's heart, to be unmoved,
The poet's star-tuned harp, to sweep,
The patriot's voice, to teach to rouse,
The monarch's crown, to light the brows?—
He giveth His beloved, sleep.

What do we give to our beloved ?
 A little faith all undisproved,
 A little dust to overweep,
 And bitter memories to make
 The whole earth blasted for our sake.
 He giveth His beloved, sleep.

‘Sleep soft, beloved !’ we sometimes say,
 But have no tune to charm away
 Sad dreams that through the eyelids creep.
 But never doleful dream again
 Shall break the happy slumber when
 He giveth His beloved, sleep.

O earth, so full of dreary noises !
 O men, with wailing in your voices !
 O delvèd gold, the wailers heap !
 O strife, O curse, that o’er it fall !
 God strikes a silence through you all,
 And giveth His beloved, sleep.

His dews drop mutely on the hill ;
 His cloud above it saileth still,
 Though on its slope men sow and reap.
 More softly than the dew is shed,
 Or cloud is floated overhead,
 He giveth His beloved, sleep.

Ay, men may wonder while they scan
 A living, thinking, feeling man
 Confirmed in such a rest to keep ;
 But angels say, and through the word
 I think their happy smile is *heard*—
 ‘He giveth His beloved, sleep.’

For me, my heart that erst did go
 Most like a tired child at a show,

That sees through tears the mummers leap,
 Would now its wearied vision close,
 Would childlike on His love repose,
 Who giveth His belovèd, sleep.

And, friends, dear friends—when it shall be
 That this low breath is gone from me,
 And round my bier ye come to weep,
 Let One, most loving of you all,
 Say, ‘Not a tear must o’er her fall’;
 ‘He giveth His belovèd, sleep.’

Sonnets from the Portuguese (1847)

V

I lift my heavy heart up solemnly,
 As once Electra her sepulchral urn,
 And, looking in thine eyes, I overturn
 The ashes at thy feet. Behold and see
 What a great heap of grief lay hid in me,
 And how the red wild sparkles dimly burn
 Through the ashen greyness. If thy foot in scorn
 Could tread them out to darkness utterly,
 It might be well perhaps. But if instead
 Thou wait beside me for the wind to blow
 The grey dūst up,—those laurels on thine head,
 O my Belovèd, will not shield thee so,
 That none of all the fires shall scorch and shred
 The hair beneath. Stand farther off then!—go.

XLIII

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.
 I love thee to the length and breadth and height
 My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
 For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.
 I love thee to the level of everyday’s
 Most quiet need, by sun and candle-light.
 I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;
 I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise.

I love thee with the passion put to use
 In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.
 I love thee with a love I seemed to lose
 With my lost saints,—I love thee with the breath,
 Smiles, tears, of all my life !—and, if God choose,
 I shall but love thee better after death.

But then the Thrushes sang

(From *Aurora Leigh*)

(1857)

But then the thrushes sang
 And shook my pulses and the elms' new leaves ;
 At which I turned, and held my finger up,
 And bade him mark that, howsoe'er the world
 Went ill, as he related, certainly
 The thrushes still sang in it. At the word
 His brow would soften,—and he bore with me
 In melancholy patience, not unkind,
 While breaking into voluble ecstasy
 I flattered all the beauteous country round,
 As poets use, the skies, the clouds, the fields,
 The happy violets hiding from the roads
 The primroses run down to, carrying gold ;
 The tangled hedgerows, where the cows push out
 Impatient horns and tolerant churning-mouths
 'Twixt dripping ash-boughs,—hedge-rows all alive
 With birds, and gnats, and large white butterflies
 Which look as if the May-flower had caught life
 And palpitated forth upon the wind ;
 Hills, vales, woods, netted in a silver mist,
 Farms, granges, doubled up among the hills ;
 And cattle grazing in the watered vales,
 And cottage-chimneys smoking from the woods,
 And cottage-gardens smelling everywhere,
 Confused with smell of orchards. ' See,' I said,
 ' And see ! is God not with us on the earth ?
 And shall we put Him down by aught we do ?

Who says there's nothing for the poor and vile
 Save poverty and wickedness ? behold !'
 And ankle-deep in English grass I leaped
 And clapped my hands, and called all very fair.

A Musical Instrument (1862)

What was he doing, the great god Pan,
 Down in the reeds by the river ?
 Spreading ruin and scattering ban,
 Splashing and paddling with hoofs of a goat,
 And breaking the golden lilies afloat
 With the dragon-fly on the river.

He tore out a reed, the great god Pan,
 From the deep cool bed of the river :
 The limpid water turbidly ran,
 And the broken lilies a-dying lay,
 And the dragon-fly had fled away,
 Ere he brought it out of the river.

High on the shore sate the great god Pan,
 While turbidly flowed the river ;
 And hacked and hewed as a great god can,
 With his 'hard bleak steel at the patient reed,
 Till there was not a sign of a leaf indeed
 To prove it fresh from the river.

He cut it short, did the great god Pan
 (How tall it stood in the river !),
 Then drew the pith, like the heart of a man,
 Steadily from the outside ring,
 And notched the poor dry empty thing
 In holes, as he sate by the river.

'This is the way,' laughed the great god Pan
 (Laughed while he sate by the river),
 'The only way, since gods began

To make sweet music, they could succeed.'
 Then, dropping his mouth to a hole in the reed,
 He blew in power by the river.

Sweet, sweet, sweet, O Pan!
 Piercing sweet by the river!
 Blinding sweet, O great god Pan!
 The sun on the hill forgot to die,
 And the lilies revived, and the dragon-fly
 Came back to dream on the river.

Yet half a beast is the great god Pan,
 To laugh as he sits by the river,
 Making a poet out of a man:
 The true gods sigh for the cost and pain,—
 For the reed which grows nevermore again
 As a reed with the reeds in the river.

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI

With Tennyson, he is the surest artist of his time in verse; he is also the poet with the steadiest instinct for perfection. . . Rossetti has left less inferior or superfluous verse than any great writer of the age. . . . If he suffers for anything, it is for his economy, as most writers do for their superfluity.—(*Survey*, ii. 1, 5.)

The Blessed Damozel (1850)

The blessed damozel leaned out
 From the gold bar of Heaven;
 Her eyes were deeper than the depth
 Of waters stilled at even;
 She had three lilies in her hand,
 And the stars in her hair were seven.

Her robe, ungirt from clasp to hem,
 No wrought flowers did adorn,
 But a white rose of Mary's gift,
 For service meetly worn;
 Her hair that lay along her back
 Was yellow like ripe corn.

Herseemed she scarce had been a day
One of God's choristers ;
The wonder was not yet quite gone
From that still look of hers ;
Albeit, to them she left, her day
Had counted as ten years.

(To one, it is ten years of years.
. . . Yet now, and in this place,
Surely she leaned o'er me—her hair
Fell all about my face. . . .
Nothing : the autumn-fall of leaves.
The whole year sets apace.)

It was the rampart of God's house
That she was standing on ;
By God built over the sheer depth
The which is Space begun ;
So high, that looking downward thence
She scarce could see the sun.

It lies in Heaven, across the flood
Of ether, as a bridge.
Beneath, the tides of day and night
With flame and darkness ridge
The void, as low as where this earth
Spins like a fretful midge.

Around her, lovers, newly met
'Mid deathless love's acclaims,
Spoke evermore among themselves
Their heart-remembered names ;
And the souls mounting up to God
Went by her like thin flames.

And still she bowed herself and stooped
Out of the circling charm ;

Until her bosom must have made
 The bar she leaned on warm,
 And the lilies lay as if asleep
 Along her bended arm.

From the fixed place of Heaven she saw
 Time like a pulse shake fierce
 Through all the worlds. Her gaze still strove
 Within the gulf to pierce
 Its path ; and now she spoke as when
 The stars sang in their spheres.

The sun was gone now ; the curled moon
 Was like a little feather
 Fluttering far down the gulf ; and now
 She spoke through the still weather.
 Her voice was like the voice the stars
 Had when they sang together.

(Ah sweet ! Even now, in that bird's song,
 Strove not her accents there,
 Fain to be hearkened ? When those bells
 Possessed the mid-day air,
 Strove not her steps to reach my side
 Down all the echoing stair ?)

'I wish that he were come to me,
 For he will come,' she said.
 'Have I not prayed in Heaven ?—on earth,
 Lord, Lord, has he not pray'd ?
 Are not two prayers a perfect strength ?
 And shall I feel afraid ?

'When round his head the aureole clings,
 And he is clothed in white,
 I'll take his hand and go with him
 To the deep wells of light ;
 As unto a stream we will step down,
 And bathe there in God's sight.

' We two will stand beside that shrine,
Occult, withheld, untrod,
Whose lamps are stirred continually
With prayer sent up to God ;
And see our old prayers, granted, melt
Each like a little cloud.

' We two will lie i' the shadow of
That living mystic tree
Within whose secret growth the Dove
Is sometimes felt to be,
While every leaf that His plumes touch
Saith His Name audibly.

' And I myself will teach to him,
I myself, lying so,
The songs I sing here ; which his voice
Shall pause in, hushed and slow,
And find some knowledge at each pause,
Or some new thing to know.'

(Alas ! we two, we two, thou say'st !
Yea, one wast thou with me
That once of old. But shall God lift
To endless unity
The soul whose likeness with thy soul
Was but its love for thee ?)

' We two,' she said, ' will seek the groves
Where the lady Mary is,
With her five handmaidens, whose names
Are five sweet symphonies,
Cecily, Gertrude, Magdalen,
Margaret and Rosalys.

' Circlewise sit they, with bound locks
And foreheads garlanded ;
Into the fine cloth white like flame

Weaving the golden thread,
 To fashion the birth-robcs for them
 Who are just born, being dead.

‘He shall fear, haply, and be dumb :
 Then will I lay my cheek
 To his, and tell about our love,
 Not once abashed or weak :
 And the dear Mother will approve
 My pride, and let me speak.

‘Herself shall bring us, hand in hand,
 To Him round Whom all souls
 Kneel, the clear-ranged unnumbered heads
 Bowed with their aureoles :
 And angels meeting us shall sing
 To their citherns and citoles.

‘There will I ask of Christ the Lord
 Thus much for him and me :—
 Only to live as once on earth
 With Love,—only to be,
 As then awhile, for ever now
 Together, I and he.’

She gazed and listened and then said,
 Less sad of speech than mild,—
 ‘All this is when he comes.’ She ceased.
 The light thrilled towards her, fill’d
 With angels in strong level flight.
 Her eyes prayed, and she smil’d.

(I saw her smile.) But soon their path
 Was vague in distant spheres :
 And then she cast her arms along
 The golden barriers,
 And laid her face between her hands,
 And wept. (I heard her tears)

My Sister's Sleep

(1850)

She fell asleep on Christmas Eve :
At length the long-ungranted shade
Of weary eyelids overweigh'd
The pain nought else might yet relieve.

Our mother, who had leaned all day
Over the bed from chime to chime,
Then raised herself for the first time,
And as she sat her down, did pray.

Her little work-table was spread
With work to finish. For the glare
Made by her candle, she had care
To work some distance from the bed.

Without, there was a cold moon up,
Of winter radiance sheer and thin ;
The hollow halo it was in
Was like an icy crystal cup.

Through the small room, with subtle sound
Of flame, by vents the fireshine drove
And reddened. In its dim alcove
The mirror shed a clearness round.

I had been sitting up some nights,
And my tired mind felt weak and blank ;
Like a sharp strengthening wine it drank
The stillness and the broken lights.

Twelve struck. That sound, by dwindling years
Heard in each hour, crept off ; and then
The ruffled silence spread again,
Like water, that a pebble stirs.

Our mother rose from where she sat :
 Her needles, as she laid them down,
 Met lightly, and her silken gown
 Settled : no other noise than that.

‘Glory unto the Newly Born !’
 So, as said angels, she did say ;
 Because we were in Christmas Day,
 Though it would still be long till morn.

Just then in the room over us
 There was a pushing back of chairs,
 As some who had sat unawares
 So late, now heard the hour, and rose.

With anxious softly-stepping haste
 Our mother went where Margaret lay,
 Fearing the sounds o’erhead—should they
 Have broken her long watched-for rest !

She stooped an instant, calm, and turned ;
 But suddenly turned back again
 And all her features seemed in pain
 With woe, and her eyes gazed and yearned.

For my part, I but hid my face,
 And held my breath, and spoke no word :
 There was none spoken ; but I heard
 The silence for a little space.

Our mother bowed herself and wept :
 And both my arms fell, and I said,
 ‘God knows I knew that she was dead.’
 And there, all white, my sister slept.

Then kneeling, upon Christmas morn
 A little after twelve o’clock,
 We said, ere the first quarter struck,
 ‘Christ’s blessing on the newly born !’

Sonnets from 'The House of Life' (*Begun 1870*)

LXXIV.—S. LUKE THE PAINTER

Give honour unto Luke Evangelist ;
For he it was (the aged legends say)
Who first taught Art to fold her hands and pray.
Scarcely at once she dared to rend the mist
Of devious symbols : but soon having wist
How sky-breadth and field-silence and this day
Are symbols also in some deeper way,
She looked through these to God and was God's priest.

And if, past noon, her toil began to irk,
And she sought talismans, and turned in vain
To soulless self-reflections of man's skill,—
Yet now, in this the twilight, she might still
Kneel in the latter grass to pray again,
Ere the night cometh and she may not work.

LXXXVI.—LOST DAYS

The lost days of my life until to-day,
What were they could I see them on the street
Lie as they fell ? Would they be ears of wheat
Sown once for food but trodden into clay ?
Or golden coins squandered and still to pay ?
Or drops of blood dabbling the guilty feet ?
Or such spilt water as in dreams must cheat
The undying throats of Hell, athirst alway ?

I do not see them here ; but after death
God knows I know the faces I shall see,
Each one a murdered self, with low last breath.
'I am thyself,—what hast thou done to me ?'
'And I—and I—thyself,' (lo ! each one saith,)
'And thou thyself to all eternity !'

XCVII.—A SUPERScription

Look in my face ; my name is Might-have-been ;
 I am also called No-more, Too-late, Farewell ;
 Unto thine ear I hold the dead-sea shell
 Cast up thy Life's foam-fretted feet between ;
 Unto thine eyes the glass where that is seen
 Which had Life's form and Love's, but by my spell
 Is now a shaken shadow intolerable,
 Of ultimate things unuttered the frail screen.

Mark me, how still I am ! But should there dart
 One moment through thy soul the soft surprise
 Of that winged Peace which lulls the breath of sighs,—
 Then shalt thou see me smile, and turn apart
 Thy visage to mine ambush at thy heart
 Sleepless with cold commemorative eyes.

CHRISTINA GEORGINA ROSSETTI

The only mistress in our language of sacred verse, is also one of the safest artists among the English poets. . . . All her poetry, and we may add her prose, is a perfect mirror ; we seem to look through and not at the glass ; no distorting cracks or dimnesses, no unreal coloured fringe. . . . It is a hard thing, and attained by few, to be infantine, homely, and devout, and also to keep within the bounds of literature ; but she does attain it.—(*Survey*, ii. 22, 25.)

Spring Quiet

(Written 1847)

Gone were but the Winter,
 Come were but the Spring,
 I would go to a covert
 Where the birds sing.

Where in the whitethorn
 Singeth a thrush,
 And a robin sings
 In the holly-bush.

Full of fresh scents
Are the budding boughs
Arching high over
A cool green house :

Full of sweet scents,
And whispering air
Which sayeth softly :
' We spread no snare ;

' Here dwell in safety,
Here dwell alone,
With a clear stream
And a mossy stone.

' Here the sun shineth
Most shadily ;
Here is heard an echo
Of the far sea,
Though far off it be.'

Bitter for Sweet*(Written 1848)*

Summer is gone with all its roses,
Its sun and perfumes and sweet flowers,
Its warm air and refreshing showers ;
And even Autumn closes.

Yea, Autumn's chilling self is going,
And winter comes which is yet colder ;
Each day the hoar-frost waxes bolder,
And the last buds cease blowing.

Song*(Written 1848)*

When I am dead, my dearest,
Sing no sad songs for me ;
Plant thou no roses at my head,
Nor shady cypress tree :

•

Be the green grass above me
 With showers and dewdrops wet ;
 And if thou wilt, remember ;
 And if thou wilt, forget.

I shall not see the shadows,
 I shall not feel the rain ;
 I shall not hear the nightingale
 Sing on, as if in pain :
 And dreaming through the twilight
 That doth not rise nor set,
 Haply I may remember,
 And haply may forget.

Holy Innocents

(Written 1853)

Sleep, little Baby, sleep ;
 The holy Angels love thee,
 And guard thy bed, and keep
 A blessed watch above thee.
 No spirit can come near
 Nor evil beast to harm thee :
 Sleep, Sweet, devoid of fear
 Where nothing need alarm thee.

The Love which doth not sleep,
 The eternal Arms surround thee :
 The Shepherd of the sheep
 In perfect love hath found thee.
 Sleep through the holy night,
 Christ-kept from snare and sorrow,
 Until thou wake to light
 And love and warmth to-morrow.

Echo

(Written 1854)

Come to me in the silence of the night ;
Come in the speaking silence of a dream ;
Come with soft rounded cheeks and eyes as bright
As sunlight on a stream ;
Come back in tears,
O memory, hope, love of finished years.

O dream how sweet, too sweet, too bitter sweet,
Whose wakening should have been in Paradise,
Where souls brimful of love abide and meet ;
Where thirsting longing eyes
Watch the slow door
That opening, letting in, lets out no more.

Yet come to me in dreams, that I may live
My very life again though cold in death :
Come back to me in dreams, that I may give
Pulse for pulse, breath for breath :
Speak low, lean low,
As long ago, my love, how long ago.

A Birthday

(Written 1857)

My heart is like a singing bird
Whose nest is in a watered shoot ;
My heart is like an apple-tree
Whose boughs are bent with thickset fruit ;
My heart is like a rainbow shell
That paddles in a halcyon sea ;
My heart is gladder than all these
Because my love is come to me.

Raise me a dais of silk and down ;
Hang it with vair and purple dyes ;
Carve it in doves and pomegranates,
And peacocks with a hundred eyes ;

Work it with gold and silver grapes,
 In leaves and silver fleurs-de-lys ;
 Because the birthday of my life
 Is come, my love is come to me.

Up-hill*(Written 1858)*

Does the road wind up-hill all the way ?
 Yes, to the very end.
 Will the day's journey take the whole long day ?
 From morn to night, my friend.

But is there for the night a resting-place ?
 A roof for when the slow dark hours begin.
 May not the darkness hide it from my face ?
 You cannot miss that inn.

Shall I meet other wayfarers at night ?
 Those who have gone before.
 Then must I knock, or call when just in sight ?
 They will not keep you standing at that door.

Shall I find comfort, travel-sore and weak ?
 Of labour you shall find the sum.
 Will there be beds for me and all who seek ?
 Yea, beds for all who come.

From 'Old and New Year Ditties' *(Written 1860)*

Passing away, saith the World, passing away :
 Chances, beauty and youth sapped day by day.
 Thy life never continueth in one stay.
 Is the eye waxen dim, is the dark hair changing to grey
 That hath won neither laurel nor bay ?
 I shall clothe myself in Spring and bud in May :
 Thou, root-stricken, shalt not rebuild thy decay
 On my bosom for aye.
 Then I answered : Yea.

Passing away, saith my Soul, passing away :
 With its burden of fear and hope, of labour and play,
 Harken what the past doth witness and say :
 Rust in thy gold, a moth is in thine array,
 A canker is in thy bud, thy leaf must decay.
 At midnight, at cockcrow, at morning, one certain day
 Lo, the Bridegroom shall come and shall not delay :
 Watch thou and pray.
 Then I answered : Yea.

Passing away, saith my God, passing away :
 Winter passeth after the long delay :
 New grapes on the vine, new figs on the tender spray,
 Turtle calleth turtle in Heaven's May.
 Though I tarry, wait for Me, trust Me, watch and pray.
 Arise, come away, night is past and lo, it is day,
 My love, My sister, My spouse, thou shalt hear me say.
 Then I answered : Yea.

Consider (*Written 1863*)

Consider

The lilies of the field whose bloom is brief :—
 We are as they ;
 Like them we fade away,
 As doth a leaf.

Consider

The sparrows of the air of small account :
 Our God doth view
 Whether they fall or mount,—
 He guards us too.

Consider

The lilies that do neither spin nor toil,
 Yet are most fair :—
 What profits all this care
 And all this coil ?

Consider
 The birds that have no barn nor harvest-weeks ;
 God gives them food :—
 Much more our Father seeks
 To do us good.

The Lowest Place *(Written 1863)*

Give me the lowest place : not that I dare
 Ask for that lowest place, but Thou hast died
 That I might live and share
 Thy glory by Thy side.

Give me the lowest place : or if for me
 That lowest place too high, make one more low
 Where I may sit and see
 My God and love Thee so.

A Christmas Carol *(Written before 1872)*

In the bleak mid-winter
 Frosty wind made moan,
 Earth stood hard as iron,
 Water like a stone ;
 Snow had fallen, snow on snow,
 Snow on snow,
 In the bleak mid-winter
 Long ago.

Our God, Heaven cannot hold Him
 Nor earth sustain ;
 Heaven and earth shall flee away
 When he comes to reign :
 In the bleak mid-winter
 A stable-place sufficed
 The Lord God Almighty
 Jesus Christ.

Enough for Him whom cherubim
Worship night and day,
A breastful of milk
And a mangerful of hay ;
Enough for Him whom angels
Fall down before,
The ox and ass and camel
Which adore.

Angels and archangels
May have gathered there,
Cherubim and seraphim
Thronged the air ;
But only His mother
In her maiden bliss
Worshipped the Beloved
With a kiss.

What can I give Him,
Poor as I am ?
If I were a shepherd
I would bring a lamb,
If I were a Wise Man
I would do my part,—
Yet what I can I give Him,
Give my heart.

Sonnet from 'Monna Innominata'

(Written before 1882)

'E drizzeremo gli occhi al Primo Amore.'—DANTE.

'Ma trovo peso non da le mie braccia.'—PETRARCA.

If I could trust mine own self with your fate,
Shall I not rather trust it in God's hand ?
Without Whose Will one lily doth not stand,
Nor sparrow fall at his appointed date ;
Who numbereth the innumerable sand,
Who weighs the wind and water with a weight,
To Whom the world is neither small nor great,
Whose knowledge foreknew every plan we planned.

Searching my heart for all that touches you,
 I find there only love and love's goodwill
 Helpless to help and impotent to do,
 Of understanding dull, of sight most dim ;
 And therefore I commend you back to Him
 Whose love your love's capacity can fill.

Heaven Overarches (*Written 1893*)

Heaven overarches earth and sea,
 Earth-sadness and sea-bitterness.
 Heaven overarches you and me :
 A little while and we shall be—
 Please God—where there is no more sea
 Nor barren wilderness.

Heaven overarches you and me,
 And all earth's gardens and her graves.
 Look up with me, until we see
 The day break and the shadows flee.
 What though to-night wrecks you and me
 If so to-morrow saves ?

WILLIAM MORRIS

It must be said that he pays for his facility and abundance, like most of our poets who have been thus endowed, but unlike his master Chaucer, who is ever fresh and ever salient. . . . Yet who shall quarrel with one who was so liberal of handiwork that is without a fault ? And if some of his pattern repeats itself, the whole fabric is still full of variety.—(*Survey*, ii. 31.)

The Sailing of the Sword (*1858*)

Across the empty garden-beds,
 When the Sword went out to sea,
 I scarcely saw my sisters' heads
 Bowed each beside a tree.
 I could not see the castle leads,
 When the Sword went out to sea.

Alicia wore a scarlet gown,
 When the Sword went out to sea,
But Ursula's was russet brown :
 For the mist we could not see
The scarlet roofs of the good town,
 When the Sword went out to sea.

Green holly in Alicia's hand,
 When the Sword went out to sea ;
With sere oak-leaves did Ursula stand ;
 O ! yet alas for me !
I did but bear a peel'd white wand,
 When the Sword went out to sea.

O, russet brown and scarlet bright,
 When the Sword went out to sea,
My sisters wore ; I wore but white :
 Red, brown, and white, are three ;
Three damozels ; each had a knight,
 When the Sword went out to sea.

Sir Robert shouted loud, and said :
 When the Sword went out to sea,
Alicia, while I see thy head,
 What shall I bring for thee ?
O, my sweet Lord, a ruby red :
 The Sword went out to sea.

Sir Miles said, while the sails hung down,
 When the Sword went out to sea,
O, Ursula ! while I see the town,
 What shall I bring for thee ?
Dear knight, bring back a falcon brown :
 The Sword went out to sea.

But my Roland, no word he said
 When the Sword went out to sea,
But only turn'd away his head ;
 A, quick shriek came from me :

Come back, dear lord, to your white maid.
The Sword went out to sea.

The hot sun bit the garden-beds
When the Sword came back from sea ;
 Beneath an apple-tree our heads
 Stretched out toward the sea ;
 Grey gleam'd the thirsty castle-leads,
When the Sword came back from sea.

Lord Robert brought a ruby red,
When the Sword came back from sea ;
 He kissed Alicia on the head :
 I am come back to thee ;
 'Tis time, sweet love, that we were wed,
Now the Sword is back from sea !

Sir Miles he bore a falcon brown,
When the Sword came back from sea ;
 His arms went round tall Ursula's gown :
 What joy, O love, but thee ?
 Let us be wed in the good town,
Now the Sword is back from sea !

My heart grew sick, no more afraid,
When the Sword came back from sea ;
 Upon the deck a tall white maid
 Sat on Lord Roland's knee ;
 His chin was press'd upon her head,
When the Sword came back from sea !

From 'The Life and Death of Jason' (1867)

THE FINDING OF THE FLEECE

But Jason, going swiftly with good heart,
 Came to the wished-for shrine built all apart
 Midmost the temple, that on pillars stood
 Of jasper green, and marble red as blood,

All white itself and carven cunningly
With Neptune bringing from the wavy sea
The golden shining ram of Athamas ;
And the first door thereof of silver was,
Wrought over with a golden glittering sun
That seemed well-nigh alike the heavenly one.
Such art therein the cunningest of men
Had used ; which little Jason heeded then,
But thrusting in the lock the smallest key
Of those he bore, it opened easily ;
And then five others, neither wrought of gold,
Nor carved with tales, nor lovely to behold,
He opened ; but before the last one stayed
His hand, wherein the heavy key he weighed,
And pondering, spake a low and muttered word :—
‘ The prize is reached, which yet I am afeard
To draw unto me ; since I know indeed,
That henceforth war and toil shall be my meed.—
Too late to fear, it was too late, the hour
I left the grey cliffs and the beechen bower,
So here I take hard life and deathless praise,
Who once was fain of nought but quiet days,
And painless life, not empty of delight ;
I, who shall now be quickener of the fight,
Named by a great name—a far babbled name,
The ceaseless seeker after praise and fame.

‘ May all be well, and on the noisy ways
Still may I find some wealth of happy days.’

Therewith he threw the last door open wide,
Whose hammered iron did the marvel hide,
And shut his dazzled eyes, and stretched his hands
Out toward the sea-born wonder of all lands,
And plunged them deep within the locks of gold,
Grasping the Fleece within his mighty hold.

THE TRIBUTE OF MORRIS TO HIS MASTER

Would that I

Had but some portion of that mastery
 That from the rose-hung lanes of woody Kent
 Through these five hundred years such songs have sent
 To us, who, meshed within this smoky net
 Of unrejoicing labour, love them yet.
 And thou, O Master!—Yea, my Master still,
 Whatever foot have scaled Parnassus' hill,
 Since like thy measures, clear and sweet and strong,
 Thames' stream scarce fettered drave the dace along
 Unto the bastioned bridge, his only chain.—
 O Master, pardon me, if yet in vain
 Thou art my Master, and I fail to bring
 Before men's eyes the image of the thing
 My heart is filled with : thou whose dreamy eyes
 Beheld the flush to Cressid's cheeks arise,
 When Troilus rode up the praising street,
 As clearly as they saw thy townsmen meet
 Those who in vineyards of Poictou withstood
 The glittering horror of the steel-topped wood.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

His perfect work would fill a large anthology ; it is now swamped in a dozen volumes. Yet one thing no anthology could exhibit, and that is his range of lyrical instrumentation. . . . With his impeccable ear, Swinburne seems to have cared little for theories of prosody ; but his verse is an inexhaustible mine for the metrist. He has endless new tunes ; and he makes the old tunes as new as any of the new ones.—(*Survey*, ii. 55, 78.)

Chorus from 'Atalanta in Calydon' (1865)

When the hounds of spring are on winter's traces,
 The mother of months in meadow or plain
 Fills the shadows and windy places
 With lisp of leaves and ripple of rain ;
 And the brown bright nightingale amorous
 Is half assuaged for Itylus,

For the Thracian ships and the foreign faces,
The tongueless vigil, and all the pain.

Come with bows bent and with emptying of quivers,
Maiden most perfect, lady of light,
With a noise of winds and many rivers,
With a clamour of waters, and with might ;
Bind on thy sandals, O thou most fleet,
Over the splendour and speed of thy feet ;
For the faint east quickens, the wan west shivers,
Round the feet of the day and the feet of the
night.

Where shall we find her, how shall we sing to her,
Fold our hands round her knees, and cling ?
O that man's heart were as fire and could spring to
her,
Fire, or the strength of the streams that spring !
For the stars and the winds are unto her
As raiment, as songs of the harp-player ;
For the risen stars and the fallen cling to her,
And the southwest-wind and the west-wind sing.

For winter's rains and ruins are over,
And all the season of snows and sins ;
The days dividing lover and lover,
The light that loses, the night that wins ;
And time remember'd is grief forgotten,
And frosts are slain and flowers begotten,
And in green underwood and cover
Blossom by blossom the spring begins.

From ' Sapphics '

(1866)

All the night sleep came not upon my eyelids,
Shed not dew, nor shook nor unclosed a feather,
Yet with lips shut close and with eyes of iron
Stood and beheld me.

Then to me so lying awake a vision
 Came without sleep over the seas and touched me,
 Softly touched mine eyelids and lips ; and I too,
 Full of the vision,

Saw the white implacable Aphrodite,
 Saw the hair unbound and the feet unsandalled
 Shine as fire of sunset on western waters ;
 Saw the reluctant

Feet, the straining plumes of the doves that drew her,
 Looking always, looking with necks reverted,
 Back to Lesbos, back to the hills whereunder
 Shone Mitylene ;

Heard the flying feet of the Loves behind her
 Make a sudden thunder upon the waters,
 As the thunder flung from the strong unclosing
 Wings of a great wind.

A Match

(1866)

If love were what the rose is,
 And I were like the leaf,
 Our lives would grow together
 In sad or singing weather,
 Blown fields or flowerful closes,
 Green pleasure or grey grief ;
 If love were what the rose is,
 And I were like the leaf.

If I were what the words are,
 And love were like the tune,
 With double sound and single
 Delight our lips would mingle,
 With kisses glad as birds are
 That get sweet rain at noon ;
 If I were what the words are,
 And love were like the tune.

If you were life, my darling,
And I your love were death,
We'd shine and snow together
Ere March made sweet the weather
With daffodil and starling
And hours of fruitful breath ;
If you were life, my darling,
And I your love were death.

If you were thrall to sorrow,
And I were page to joy,
We'd play for lives and seasons
With loving looks and treasons
And tears of night and morrow
And laughs of maid and boy ;
If you were thrall to sorrow,
And I were page to joy.

If you were April's lady,
And I were lord in May,
We'd throw with leaves for hours
And draw for days with flowers,
Till day like night were shady
And night were bright like day ;
If you were April's lady,
And I were lord in May.

If you were queen of pleasure,
And I were king of pain,
We'd hunt down love together,
Pluck out his flying-feather,
And teach his feet a measure,
And find his mouth a rein ;
If you were queen of pleasure,
And I were king of pain.

Autumn in Cornwall

(1878)

(From *Four Songs of Four Seasons*)

The year lies fallen and faded
 On cliffs by clouds invaded,
 With tongues of storms upbraided,
 With wrath of waves bedinned;
 And inland, wild with warning,
 As in deaf ears or scorning,
 The clarion even and morning
 Rings of the south-west wind.

The wild bents wane and wither
 In blasts whose breath bows hither
 Their grey-grown heads and thither,
 Unblest of rain and sun;
 The pale fierce heavens are crowded
 With shapes like dreams beclouded,
 As though the old year enshrouded
 Lay, long ere life were done.

Full-charged with oldworld wonders,
 From dusk Tintagel thunders
 A note that smites and sunders
 The hard frore fields of air;
 A trumpet stormier-sounded
 Than once from lists rebounded
 When strong men sense-confounded
 Fell thick in tourney there.

From scarce a duskier dwelling
 Such notes of wail rose welling
 Through the outer darkness, telling
 In the awful singer's ears
 What souls the darkness covers,
 What love-lost souls of lovers,
 Whose cry still hangs and hovers
 In each man's born that hears.

For there by Hector's brother
 And yet some thousand other
 He that had grief to mother
 Passed pale from Dante's sight ;
 With one fast linked as fearless,
 Perchance, there only tearless ;
 Iseult and Tristram, peerless
 And perfect queen and knight.

A shrill-winged sound comes flying
 North, as of wild souls crying
 The cry of things undying,
 That know what life must be ;
 Or as the old year's heart, stricken
 Too sore for hope to quicken
 By thoughts like thorns that thicken,
 Broke, breaking with the sea.

Translation from Victor Hugo (1878)

Take heed of this small child of earth ;
 He is great ; he hath in him God most high.
 Children before their fleshly birth
 Are lights alive in the blue sky.

In our light bitter world of wrong
 They come ; God gives us them awhile.
 His speech is in their stammering tongue,
 And his forgiveness in their smile.

Their sweet light rests upon our eyes.
 Alas ! their right to joy is plain.
 If they are hungry, Paradise
 Weeps, and, if cold, Heaven thrills with pain.

The want that saps their sinless flower
 Speaks judgment on sin's ministers.
 Man holds an angel in his power.
 Ah ! deep in Heaven what thunder stirs,

When God seeks out these tender things
 Whom in the shadow where we sleep
 He sends us clothed about with wings,
 And finds them ragged babes that weep !

The Garden of Proserpine

(1878)

Here, where the world is quiet ;
 Here, where all trouble seems
 Dead winds' and spent waves' riot
 In doubtful dreams of dreams ;
 I watch the green field growing
 For reaping folk and sowing,
 For harvest-time and mowing,
 A sleepy world of streams.

I am tired of tears and laughter,
 And men that laugh and weep ;
 Of what may come hereafter
 For men that sow to reap :
 I am weary of days and hours,
 Blown buds of barren flowers,
 Desires and dreams and powers,
 And everything but sleep.

Here life has death for neighbour,
 And far from eye or ear
 Wan waves and wet winds labour,
 Weak ships and spirits steer ;
 They drive adrift, and whither
 They wot not who make thither ;
 But no such winds blow hither,
 And no such things grow here.

No growth of moor or coppice,
 No heather-flower or vine,
 But bloomless buds of poppies,
 Green grapes of Proserpine,

Pale beds of blowing rushes,
Where no leaf blooms or blushes
Save this whereout she crushes
For dead men deadly wine.

Pale, without name or number,
In fruitless fields of corn,
They bow themselves and slumber
All night till light is born ;
And like a soul belated,
In hell and heaven unmated,
By cloud and mist abated
Comes out of darkness morn.

Though one were strong as seven,
He too with death shall dwell,
Nor wake with wings in heaven,
Nor weep for pains in hell ;
Though one were fair as roses,
His beauty clouds and closes ;
And well though love reposes,
In the end it is not well.

Pale, beyond porch and portal,
Crowned with calm leaves, she stands
Who gathers all things mortal
With cold immortal hands ;
Her languid lips are sweeter
Than love's who fears to greet her
To men that mix and meet her
From many times and lands.

She waits for each and other,
She waits for all men born ;
Forgets the earth her mother,
The life of fruits and corn ;
And spring and seed and swallow
Take wing for her and follow
Where summer songs ring hollow
And flowers are put to scorn.

There go the loves that wither,
 The old loves with wearier wings;
 And all dead years draw thither,
 And all disastrous things;
 Dead dreams of days forsaken,
 Blind buds that snows have shaken,
 Wild leaves that winds have taken,
 Red strays of ruined springs.

We are not sure of sorrow,
 And joy was never sure;
 To-day will die to-morrow;
 Time stoops to no man's lure;
 And love, grown faint and fretful,
 With lips but half regretful
 Sighs, and with eyes forgetful
 Weeps that no loves endure.

From too much love of living,
 From hope and fear set free,
 We thank with brief thanksgiving
 Whatever gods may be
 That no life lives for ever;
 That dead men rise up never;
 That even the weariest river
 Winds somewhere safe to sea.

Then star no sun shall waken,
 Nor any change of light:
 Nor sound of waters shaken,
 Nor any sound or sight:
 Nor wintry leaves or vernal,
 Nor days nor things diurnal;
 Only the sleep eternal
 In an eternal night.

From 'Hertha'

(1887)

I am that which began ;
Out of me the years roll ;
Out of me God and man ;
I am equal and whole ;
God changes, and man, and the form of them bodily ;
I am the soul.

Before ever land was,
Before ever the sea,
Or soft hair of the grass,
Or fair limbs of the tree,
Or the flesh colour'd fruit of my branches, I was, and
thy soul was in me.

First life on my sources
First drifted and swam ;
Out of me are the forces
That save it or damn ;
Out of me man and woman, and wild-beast and bird :
before God I was, I am.

Beside or above me
Naught is there to go ;
Love or unlove me,
Unknow me or know,
I am that which unloves me and loves ; I am stricken,
and I am the blow.

GEORGE MEREDITH**Dirge in Woods**

(1870)

A wind sways the pines,
And below
Not a breath of wild air ;
Still as the mosses that glow
On the flooring and over the lines
Of the roots here and there.

The pine-tree drops its dead ;
 They are quiet, as under the sea.
 Overhead, overhead,
 Rushes life in a race,
 As the clouds the clouds chase ;
 And we go,
 And we drop like the fruits of the tree,
 Even we,
 Even so.

Breath of the Briar

(1892)

I

O briar-scents, on yon wet wing
 Of warm south-west wind brushing by,
 You mind me of the sweetest thing
 That ever mingled frank and shy :
 When she and I, by love enticed,
 Beneath the orchard-apples met,
 In equal halves a ripe one sliced,
 And smelt the juices ere we ate.

II

That apple of the briar-scent,
 Among our lost in Britain now,
 Was green of rind, and redolent
 Of sweetness as a milking cow.
 The briar gives it back, well nigh
 The damsel with her teeth on it ;
 Her twinkle between frank and shy,
 My thirst to bite where she had bit.

Youth in Age

(1908)

Once I was part of the music I heard
 On the boughs or sweet between earth and sky,
 For joy of the beating wings on high
 My heart shot into the breast of the bird.

I hear it now and I see it fly,
 And a life in wrinkles again is stirred,
 My heart shoots into the breast of the bird,
 As it will for sheer love till the last long sigh.

LESSER POETS

A strict anthology, containing only what is excellent in the lesser poets of this period, would still be a large one . . . these [the *minora sidera*] it is difficult to map and arrange in any clear fashion, partly because of their multitude, but partly also because they do not, save here and there, fall into marked constellations at all.—(*Survey*, ii. 85.)

I.—*Poets of the Age before the rise of Tennyson*

SIR HENRY TAYLOR

Song

(1864)

The bee to the heather,
 The lark to the sky,
 The roe to the greenwood,
 And whither shall I ?

O, Alice ! Ah, Alice !
 So sweet to the bee
 Are the moorland and heather
 By Cannock and Leigh !

O, Alice ! Ah, Alice !
 O'er Teddesley Park
 The sunny sky scatters
 The notes of the lark !

O, Alice ! Ah, Alice !
 In Beaudesert Glade
 The roes toss their antlers
 For joy of the shade !—

But, Alice, dear Alice !
 Glade, moorland, nor sky
 Without you can content me—
 And whither shall I ?

THOMAS WADE

. . . a dim late survivor from the company of Darley, Beddoes and Wells. . . . Wade has a true mystical vein which owing to his dependence on the manner and music of Shelley, hardly finds original expression ; but it is really his own.—(*Survey*, ii. 86.)

The Buried Butterfly (1839)

What lovely things are dead within the sky,
 By our corporeal vision undiscern'd—
 Extinguish'd suns, that once in glory burn'd ;
 And blighted planets, mouldering gloomily
 Beyond the girdle of the galaxy ;
 And faded essences, in light inurn'd,
 Of creatures spiritual, to that Deep return'd
 From whence they sprang, in far Eternity—
 This e'er to know is unto us forbidden ;
 But much thereto concerning may we deem,
 By inference from fact familiar :
 Beneath those radiant flowers and bright grass hidden,
 Withers a thing once golden as a star
 And seeming unsubstantial as a dream.

II.—*Spasmodic Poets*

ALEXANDER SMITH

Smith has a marked gift of poetic phrase, in his landscapes and descriptions, that fairly reminds us of Tennyson's, and may betoken some indebtedness to him.—(*Survey*, ii. 91.)

Stanzas from 'Glasgow'

(From *City Poems*) (1857)

City ! I am true son of thine ;
 Ne'er dwelt I where great mornings shine
 Around the bleating pens ; „

Ne'er by the rivulets I strayed,
And ne'er upon my childhood weighed
The silence of the glens.

Instead of shores where ocean beats,
I hear the ebb and flow of streets.

Black Labour draws his weary waves,
Into their secret-moaning caves ;

But with the morning light,
That sea again will overflow
With a long weary sound of woe,
Again to faint in night.

Wave am I in that sea of woes,
Which, night and morning, ebbs and flows.

I dwelt within a gloomy court,
Wherein did never sunbeam sport ;

Yet there my heart was stirr'd—
My very blood did dance and thrill,
When on my narrow window-sill,
Spring lighted like a bird.

Poor flowers—I watched them pine for weeks,
With leaves as pale as human cheeks.

Afar, one summer, I was borne ;
Through golden vapours of the morn,
I heard the hills of sheep :

I trod with a wild ecstasy
The bright fringe of the living sea :
And on a ruined keep

I sat, and watched an endless plain
Blacken beneath a gloom of rain.

* * *

But all these sights and sounds are strange ;
Then wherefore from thee should I range ?

Thou hast my kith and kin :
My childhood, youth, and manhood brave ;
Thou hast that unforgotten grave
Within thy central din.

A sacredness of love and death
Dwells in thy noise and smoky breath.

SYDNEY THOMPSON DOBELL

The verse of Dobell, if he did not achieve or aspire to the depth and concision of the best among the *City Poems*, has much more of the unseizable rainbow quality, and also a freer and more cunning melody than Smith commanded.—(*Survey*, ii. 93.)

A Nuptial Eve

(1856)

Oh, happy, happy maid,
 In the year of war and death
 She wears no sorrow !
 By her face so young and fair,
 By the happy wreath
 That rules her happy hair,
 She might be a bride to-morrow !
 She sits and sings within her moonlit bower,
 Her moonlit bower in rosy June,
 Yet ah, her bridal breath,
 Like fragrance from some sweet night-blooming flower,
 Moves from her moving lips in many a mournful tune !
 She sings no song of love's despair,
 She sings no lover lowly laid,
 No fond peculiar grief
 Has ever touched or bud or leaf
 Of her unblighted spring.
 She sings because she needs must sing ;
 She sings the sorrow of the air
 Whereof her voice is made.
 That night in Britain howsoe'er
 On any chords the fingers strayed
 They gave the notes of care.
 A dim sad legend old
 Long since in some pale shade
 Of some far twilight told,
 She knows not when or where,
 She sings, with trembling hand on trembling lute-strings
 laid :—

The Ballad of Keith of Ravelston

The murmur of the mourning ghost
That keeps the shadowy kine,
' O Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line ! '

Ravelston, Ravelston,
The merry path that leads
Down the golden morning hill,
And thro' the silver meads ;

Ravelston, Ravelston,
The stile beneath the tree,
The maid that kept her mother's kine,
The song that sang she !

She sang her song, she kept her kine,
She sat beneath the thorn,
When Andrew Keith of Ravelston
Rode thro' the Monday morn.

His henchmen sing, his hawk-bells ring,
His belted jewels shine ;
O Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line !

Year after year, where Andrew came,
Comes evening down the glade,
And still there sits a moonshine ghost
Where sat the sunshine maid.

Her misty hair is faint and fair,
She keeps the shadowy kine ;
O Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line !

116 A CENTURY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE—III

I lay my hand upon the stile,
The stile is lone and cold,
The burnie that goes babbling by
Says naught that can be told.

Yet, stranger ! here, from year to year,
She keeps her shadowy kine ;
O Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line !

Step out three steps, where Andrew stood—
Why blanch thy cheeks for fear ?
The ancient stile is not alone,
'Tis not the burn I hear !

She makes her immemorial moan,
She keeps her shadowy kine ;
O Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line !

III.—*Poets before the rise of Rossetti and Morris*

. . . Writers . . . who came on the scene before the great romantic renewal of the Fifties, or independently of it, who cannot be grouped with the 'spasmodics' at all, and who are of divergent schools and styles.—(*Survey*, ii. 94.)

RICHARD MONCKTON MILNES, LORD HOUGHTON

There is, first of all, the simple, unstrained, and sometimes moving verse of Richard Monckton Milnes, Lord Houghton, which belongs in spirit, and often in actual date, to the early decades of the period.—(*Survey*, ii. 94.)

Shadows

(1865)

They seemed, to those who saw them meet,
The casual friends of every day ;
Her smile was undisturbed and sweet,
His courtesy was free and gay.

But yet if one the other's name
In some unguarded moment heard,
The heart you thought so calm and tame
Would struggle like a captive bird :

And letters of mere formal phrase
Were blistered with repeated tears,—
And this was not the work of days,
But had gone on for years and years !

Alas, that love was not too strong
For maiden shame and manly pride !
Alas, that they delayed so long
The goal of mutual bliss beside !

Yet what no chance could then reveal,
And neither would be first to own,
Let fate and courage now conceal,
When truth could bring remorse alone.

EBENEZER JONES

A poet who calls aloud to be 'disinterred,' as Rossetti insisted, is Ebenezer Jones.—(*Survey*, ii. 95.)

From 'Inactivity'

(1843)

The sunshine of this summer afternoon,
Not in my parlour entered ; but abroad
Copiously as ever, everywhere it dwelt ;
Surrendering itself up unto each tree,
To be spilled about on all the leaves and twigs,
Sleeping in all the secret crevices
Of the rich rose ; broad o'er the sweeping hills,
The swelling meadows, and the spangled gardens,
Benignantly outspread. I gazed, and gazed ;
I gave a moment to encase my books,
And I was in the sunshine, and my blood
Sprang at its greeting. I was in the fields,
And up around me sprang the larks like rockets

On a jubilee day :—a bank of sand surmounting,
 I stepped into a wood, with pleasant care,
 Opening the twining branches, that imposed
 Desirable hindrance : angrily screamed
 A swiftly darting throstle on before me ;
 Two bees adown the narrow pathway flew,
 And a bewildered butterfly ; I stayed,
 To joy in the delicious noise of leaves,
 In the fresh earthy smells ;—I wandered on,
 Past the slow-pacing pheasant, and the jay
 Who would not let me leave him, but still followed
 With his harsh scream. And now I reached an opening,
 A short turfed lawn, that fenced by silver stems
 Of circling beeches, seemed a quiet home.

ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH

Clough's few successes are decisive, and defeat the insolence with which the critics have more than once tried to outlaw him from the company of the poets.—(*Survey*, ii. 96.)

Say not the Struggle Naught availeth (1849)

Say not, the struggle naught availeth,
 The labour and the wounds are vain,
 The enemy faints not, nor faileth,
 And as things have been they remain.

If hopes were dupes, fears may be liars ;
 It may be, in yon smoke concealed,
 Your comrades chase e'en now the fliers,
 And, but for you, possess the field.

For while the tired waves, vainly breaking,
 Seem here no painful inch to gain,
 Far back, through creeks and inlets making,
 Comes silent, flooding in, the main.

And not by eastern windows only,
 When daylight comes, comes in the light ;
 In front the sun climbs slow, how slowly !
 But westward, look, the land is bright !

Aspiration

(Begun 1850)

(From *Dipsychus*)

Clear stars above, thou roseate westward sky,
Take up my being into yours ; assume
My sense to know you only ; steep my brain
In your essential purity ; or, great Alps,
That wrapping round your heads in solemn clouds
Seem sternly to sweep past our vanities,
Lead me with you—take me away, preserve me !

Where lies the Land ?

(1852)

Where lies the land to which the ship would go ?
Far, far ahead, is all her seamen know.
And where the land she travels from ? Away,
Far, far behind, is all that they can say.

On sunny noons upon the deck's smooth face,
Linked arm in arm, how pleasant here to pace !
Or, o'er the stern reclining, watch below
The foaming wake far widening as we go.

On stormy nights when wild north-westerns rave,
How proud a thing to fight with wind and wave !
The dripping sailor of the reeling mast
Exults to bear, and scorns to wish it past.

Where lies the land to which the ship would go ?
Far, far ahead, is all her seamen know.
And where the land she travels from ? Away
Far, far behind, is all that they can say.

IV

It is now time to review some of the poets who, whether by discipleship or general affinity, belong to the new romantic impulse of the Fifties and Sixties.—(*Survey*, ii. 98.)

COVENTRY PATMORE

‘I have written little, but it is all my best; I have never spoken when I had nothing to say, nor spared time or labour to make my words true. I have respected posterity; and, should there be a posterity which cares for letters, I dare to hope that it will respect me.’

Coventry Patmore wrote in this Landorian tone ten years before his death in 1886. The respect that he claimed seems to be well assured. He has, at his best, the *stylus*, the sure and sharp engraving, which leaves him so distinct amongst the secondary poets of his time.—(*Survey*, ii. 98.)

Regina Coeli

(1878)

Say, did his sisters wonder what could Joseph see
In a mild, silent little Maid like thee?
And was it awful, in that narrow house,
With God for Babe and Spouse?
Nay, like thy simple, female sort, each one
Apt to find Him in Husband and in Son,
Nothing to thee came strange in this.
Thy wonder was but wondrous bliss:
Wondrous, for, though
True Virgin lives but does not know,
(Howbeit none ever yet confess'd,)
That God lies really in her breast,
Of thine He made His special nest!
And so
All mothers worship little feet,
And kiss the very ground they've trod;
But, ah, thy little Baby sweet
Who was indeed thy God.

The Toys

(1878)

My little Son, who look'd from thoughtful eyes
And moved and spoke in quiet grown-up wise,
Having my law the seventh time disobey'd,
I struck him, and dismiss'd
With hard words and unkiss'd,

His Mother, who was patient, being dead.
Then, fearing lest his grief should hinder sleep,
I visited his bed,
But found him slumbering deep,
With darken'd eyelids, and their lashes yet
From his late sobbing wet.
And I, with moan,
Kissing away his tears, left others of my own;
For, on a table drawn beside his head,
He had put, within his reach,
A box of counters and a red-vein'd stone,
A piece of glass abraded by the beach
And six or seven shells,
A bottle with bluebells
And two French copper coins, ranged there with careful art,
To comfort his sad heart.
So when that night I pray'd
To God, I wept, and said :
Ah, when at last we lie with tranced breath,
Not vexing Thee in death,
And Thou rememberest of what toys
We made our joys,
How weakly understood,
Thy great commanded good,
Then, fatherly not less
Than I whom Thou hast moulded from the clay,
Thou'lt leave Thy wrath, and say,
'I will be sorry for their childishness.'

DIGBY MACKWORTH DOLBEN

Some of his hymns and devout poems, in their fervour, finish and simplicity, recall Christina Rossetti.—(*Survey*, ii. 104.)

Goodnight*(Written 1864)*

The sun has set.
The western light
And after that

The starlit night
 Still tell of Him,
 Who far away,
 Is Lord of night
 As well as day.
 Now do you wonder,
 Dear, that I
 Wished you ' Goodnight '
 And not ' Good-bye ' ?

Beyond*(Written 1866)*

Beyond the calumny and wrong,
 Beyond the clamour and the throng,
 Beyond the praise and triumph-song
 He passed.
 Beyond the scandal and the doubt,
 The fear within, the fight without,
 The turmoil and the battle-shout
 He sleeps.

The world for him was not so sweet
 That he should grieve to stay his feet
 Where youth and manhood's highways meet,
 And die.
 For every child a mother's breast,
 For every bird a guarded nest ;
 For him alone was found no rest
 But this.

Beneath the flight of happy hours,
 Beneath the withering of the flowers
 In folds of peace more sure than ours
 He lies.
 A night no glaring dawn shall break,
 A sleep no cruel voice shall wake,
 A heritage that none can take
 Are his.

ROBERT STEPHEN HAWKER

Some other poets also dreamed themselves into the mediæval temper; but in Robert Stephen Hawker, the vicar and civiliser of Morwenstow in Cornwall, it was inherent. . . . Hawker, with his experience of wrecks and wreckers, and his ministrations to the dead and the living upon his angry coast, was himself a true man and warrior. The search for the 'vanished vase of God' is never ended; but there is something of it in Hawker's career.—(*Survey*, ii. 104–105.)

The Song of the Western Men (1862)

A good sword and a trusty hand!

A merry heart and true!

King James's men shall understand

What Cornish lads can do!

And have they fixed the where and when?

And shall Trelawny die?

Here's twenty thousand Cornish men

Will know the reason why!

Out spake their Captain brave and bold;

A merry wight was he;—

'If London Tower were Michael's hold,

We'd set Trelawny free!

'We'll cross the Tamar, land to land:

The Severn is no stay:

With "one and all," and hand in hand;

And who shall bid us nay?

'And when we come to London Wall,

A pleasant sight to view,

Come forth! come forth! ye cowards all:

Here's men as good as you.

'Trelawny he's in keep and hold:

Trelawny he may die:

But here's twenty thousand Cornish bold

Will know the reason why!'

From 'The Quest of the Sangraal' (1864)

Ho ! for the Sangraal ! vanish'd Vase of Heaven !
 That held, like Christ's own heart, an hin¹ of blood !
 Ho ! for the Sangraal !

See ! now, they pause ; for in their midst, the King,
 Arthur, the Son of Uter, and the Night,
 Helm'd with Pendragon, with the crested Crown,
 And belted with the sheath'd Excalibur² ;
 That gnash'd his iron teeth, and yearn'd for war !
 Stern was that look (high natures seldom smile)
 And in those pulses beat a thousand kings.
 A glance ! and they were husht : a lifted hand !
 And his eye ruled them like a throne of light.
 Then, with a voice that rang along the moor,
 Like the Archangel's trumpet for the dead,
 He spake—while Tamar sounded to the sea.

' Comrades in arms ! Mates of the Table Round !
 Fair Sirs, my fellows in the bannered ring,
 Ours is a lofty tryst ! this day we meet,
 Not under shield, with scarf and knightly gaze,
 To quench our thirst of love in ladies' eyes :
 We shall not mount to-day that goodly throne,
 The conscious steed, with thunder in his loins,
 To launch along the field the arrowy spear :
 Nay, but a holier theme, a mightier Quest—
 " Ho ! for the Sangraal, vanish'd Vase of God ! " "

¹ The hin was a Hebrew measure, used for the wine of the sacrifice.

² A Hebrew name, signifying ' champer of the steel.'

SEBASTIAN EVANS

He has a turn for echoes and internal rhymes which is pleasing and unborrowed. It is a great satisfaction to find such things in a poet who has been swamped.—(*Survey*, ii. 106.)

Shadows

(1865)

Lonely o'er the dying ember
 I the past recal,
 And remember in December
 April buds and August skies,
 As the shadows fall and rise,
 As the shadows rise and fall.

Quicker now they flit and flicker
 On the dreary wall;
 Aye, and quicker still, and thicker
 Throng the fitful fantasies,
 As the shadows fall and rise,
 As the shadows rise and fall.

Dimmer now they shoot and shimmer
 On the dreary wall.
 Dimmer, dimmer, still they glimmer
 Till the light in darkness dies,
 And the other shadows rise,
 And the other shadows fall.

ANNE EVANS

There is a romantic strain of a similar kind in Sebastian's sister, Anne Evans, but her real mood is that of musical melancholy. . . . But there is 'something' rarer still in *Tirlywirly*. —(*Survey*, ii. 106.)

Tirlywirly

(1880)

Tirlywirly, all alone,
 Spinning under a yew;
 Something came with no noise,
 But Tirlywirly knew.

Tirlywirly sate spinning,
 Never looked around ;
 Something made a black shadow
 Creep on the ground.

Tirlywirly sate spinning,
 Spinning fast for fear ;
 Something spoke a dark word
 Close at her ear.

Tirlywirly sang a song,
 Loud, and clear, and gay ;
 Then, when Tirlywirly sang,
 Something flew away.

Two Red Roses on a Tree

(1880)

Two red roses on a tree :
 Wind along, cold river !
 One for him, and one for me :
 Shiver, willow, shiver !
 Not a word of love we said :
 Wind along, cold river !
 Roses told the truth instead :
 Shiver, willow, shiver !
 Other roses bud and blow :
 Wind along, cold river !
 Other summers come and go :
 Shiver, willow, shiver !
 Summer days to me are dim :
 Wind along, cold river !
 Never comes a word from him :
 Shiver, willow, shiver !
 Roses tell the truth instead :
 Wind along, cold river !
 Others bloom, but mine is dead :
 Shiver, willow, shiver !

RICHARD WATSON DIXON

. . . Dixon's verse, as a whole, is far too hard of access. . . The twelve-line song *The Feathers of the Willow* is without a flaw and without a model.—(*Survey*, ii. 107, 108.)

The Feathers of the Willow (1864)

The feathers of the willow
Are half of them grown yellow
Above the swelling stream ;
And ragged are the bushes,
And rusty now the rushes,
And wild the clouded gleam.

The thistle now is older,
His stalk begins to moulder,
His head is white as snow ;
The branches all are barer,
The linnet's song is rarer,
The robin pipeth now.

ARTHUR WILLIAM EDWARD O'SHAUGH-
NESSY

O'Shaughnessy is at his best in his songs. . . . His keyboard of language is narrow, but the tones are pure, and the technique and sentence-building, often singularly intricate, usually come out right.—(*Survey*, ii. 111.)

Ode (1874)

We are the music-makers,
And we are the dreamers of dreams,
Wandering by lone sea-breakers,
And sitting by desolate streams ;
World-losers and world-forsakers,
On whom the pale moon gleams :
Yet we are the movers and shakers
Of the world forever, it seems.

With wonderful deathless ditties
We build up the world's great cities,
And out of a fabulous story
We fashion an empire's glory :

One man with a dream, at pleasure,
 Shall go forth and conquer a crown ;
 And three with a new song's measure
 Can trample a kingdom down.

We, in the ages lying
 In the buried past of the earth,
 Built Nineveh with our sighing,
 And Babel itself in our mirth ;
 And o'erthrew them with prophesying
 To the Old of the New World's worth ;
 For each age is a dream that is dying,
 Or one that is coming to birth.

A breath of our inspiration
 Is the life of each generation ;
 A wondrous thing of our dreaming,
 Unearthly, impossible seeming—
 The soldier, the king, and the peasant
 Are working together in one,
 Till our dream shall become their present,
 And their work in the world be done.

They had no vision amazing
 Of the goodly house they are raising :
 They had no divine foreshowing
 Of the land to which they are going :
 But on one man's soul it hath broken,
 A light that doth not depart ;
 And his look, or a word he hath spoken,
 Wrought flame in another man's heart.

And therefore to-day is thrilling
 With a past day's late fulfilling ;
 And the multitudes are enlisted
 In the faith that their fathers resisted,
 And, scorning the dream of to-morrow,
 Are bringing to pass, as they may,
 In the world, for its joy or its sorrow,
 The dream that was scorned yesterday.

But we, with our dreaming and singing,
Ceaseless and sorrowless we !
The glory about us clinging
Of the glorious future we see,
Our souls with high music ringing :
O men ! it must ever be
That we dwell, in our dreaming and singing,
A little apart from ye.

For we are afar with the dawning
And the suns that are not yet high,
And out of the infinite morning
Intrepid you hear us cry—
How, spite of your human scorning,
Once more God's future draws nigh,
And already goes forth the warning
That ye of the past must die.

Great hail ! we cry to the comers
From the dazzling unknown shore ;
Bring us hither your sun and your summers,
And renew our world as of yore ;
You shall teach us your song's new numbers
And things that we dreamed not before :
Yea, in spite of a dreamer who slumbers,
And a singer who sings no more.

If She But Knew

(1881)

If she but knew that I am weeping
Still for her sake,
That love and sorrow grow with keeping
Till they must break,
My heart that breaking will adore her,
Be hers and die ;
If she might hear me once implore her,
Would she not sigh ?

If she but knew that it would save me
 Her voice to hear,
 Saying she pitied me, forgave me,
 Must she forbear ?
 If she were told that I was dying,
 Would she be dumb ?
 Could she content herself with sighing ?
 Would she not come ?

EDWARD FITZGERALD

An entirely *uninfluenced* mind, endowed with taste, and true to itself, is a very rare thing. FitzGerald had such a mind ; Lamb had it ; and, with all their differences, they are both masters of language, and of somewhat the same kind of language.—(*Survey*, ii. 114.)

The Meadows in Spring (1831)

'Tis a dull sight
 To see the year dying,
 When winter winds
 Set the yellow wood sighing :
 Sighing, O sighing !

When such a time cometh
 I do retire
 Into an old room
 Beside a bright fire :
 O, pile a bright fire !

And there I sit
 Reading old things,
 Of knights and lorn damsels,
 While the wind sings—
 O, drearily sings !

I never look out
 Nor attend to the blast ;
 For all to be seen
 Is the leaves falling fast :
 Falling, falling !

But close at the hearth,
Like a cricket, sit I,
Reading of summer
And chivalry—
Gallant chivalry !

Then with an old friend
I talk of our youth—
How 'twas gladsome, but often
Foolish, forsooth :
But gladsome, gladsome !

Or, to get merry,
We sing some old rhyme
That made the wood ring again
In summer time—
Sweet summer time !

Then go we smoking,
Silent and snug :
Naught passes between us,
Save a brown jug—
Sometimes !

And sometimes a tear
Will rise in each eye,
Seeing the two old friends
So merrily—
So merrily !

And ere to bed
Go we, go we,
Down on the ashes
We kneel on the knee,
Praying together !

Thus, then, live I
Till, 'mid all the gloom,
By Heaven ! the bold sun
Is with me in the room
Shining, shining !

Then the clouds part,
 Swallows soaring between ;
 The spring is alive,
 And the meadows are green !

I jump up like mad,
 Break the old pipe in twain,
 And away to the meadows,
 The meadows again !

Stanzas from 'Omar Khayyám' (1859)

7

Come, fill the Cup, and in the Fire of Spring
 The Winter Garment of Repentance fling :
 The Bird of Time has but a little way
 To fly—and Lo ! the Bird is on the Wing.

8

And look—a thousand Blossoms with the Day
 Woke—and a thousand scatter'd into Clay :
 And this first Summer Month that brings the Rose
 Shall take Jamshýd and Kaikobád away.

9

But come with old Khayyám, and leave the Lot
 Of Kaikobád and Kaikhosrú forgot :
 Let Rustum lay about him as he will,
 Or Hátim Tai cry Supper—heed them not.

10

With me along some Strip of Herbage strown
 That just divides the desert from the sown,
 Where name of Slave and Sultán scarce is known,
 And pity Sultán Máhmúd on his Throne.

11

Here with a Loaf of Bread beneath the Bough,
A Flask of Wine, a Book of Verse—and Thou
Beside me singing in the Wilderness—
And Wilderness is Paradise enow.

12

‘How sweet is mortal Sovranty’—think some :
Others—‘How blest the Paradise to come!’
Ah, take the Cash in hand and waive the Rest ;
Oh, the brave Music of a *distant* Drum !

13

Look to the Rose that blows about us—‘Lo,
‘Laughing,’ she says, ‘into the World I blow :
‘At once the silken Tassel of my Purse
Tear, and its Treasure on the Garden throw.’

14

The Worldly Hope men set their Hearts upon
Turns Ashes—or it prospers ; and anon,
Like Snow upon the Desert’s dusty Face
Lighting a little Hour or two—is gone.

15

And those who husbanded the Golden Grain,
And those who flung it to the Winds like Rain,
Alike to no such aureate Earth are turn’d
As, buried once, Men want dug up again.

16

Think, in this batter’d Caravanseraï
Whose Doorways are alternate Night and Day,
How Sultán after Sultán with his Pomp
Abode his Hour or two, and went his way.

17

They say the Lion and the Lizard keep
 The Courts where Jamshýd gloried and drank deep ;
 And Bahrá'm, that great Hunter—the Wild Ass
 Stamps o'er his Head, and he lies fast asleep.

18

I sometimes think that never blows so red
 The Rose as where some buried Caesar bled ;
 That every Hyacinth the Garden wears
 Dropt in its Lap from some once lovely Head.

19

And this delightful Herb whose tender Green
 Fledges the River's Lip on which we lean—
 Ah, lean upon it lightly ! for who knows
 From what once lovely Lip it springs unseen !

20

Ah, my Belovèd, fill the Cup that clears
 To-DAY of past Regrets and future Fears—
 To-morrow ?—Why, *To-morrow* I may be
 Myself with Yesterday's Sev'n Thousand Years.

21

Lo ! some we loved, the loveliest and best
 That Time and Fate of all their Vintage prest,
 Have drunk their Cup a Round or two before,
 And one by one crept silently to Rest.

JAMES THOMSON

. . . James Thomson, in whom the pessimistic temper is innate or second nature, and not merely a matter of doctrine. . . . It does not, indeed, monopolise him, for some of his most beautiful work represents a revulsion from pessimism.—(*Survey*, ii, 120.)

Stanzas from 'Sunday up the River' (1862)

XV

Give a man a horse he can ride,
Give a man a boat he can sail ;
And his rank and wealth, his strength and health,
On sea nor shore shall fail.

Give a man a pipe he can smoke,
Give a man a book he can read ;
'And his home is bright with a calm delight,
Though the room be poor indeed.

Give a man a girl he can love,
As I, O my love, love thee ;
And his heart is great with the pulse of Fate,
At home, on land, on sea.

XVI

My love is the flaming Sword
To fight through the world ;
Thy love is the Shield to ward,
And the Armour of the Lord,
And the Banner of Heaven unfurled.

XVII

Let my voice ring out and over the earth,
Through all the grief and strife,
With a golden joy in a silver mirth :
Thank God for Life !

Let my voice swell out through the great abyss
To the azure dome above,
With a chord of faith in the harp of bliss :
Thank God for Love !

Let my voice thrill out beneath and above
The whole world through :
O my Love and Life, O my Life and Love,
Thank God for you !

Stanzas from 'The City of Dreadful Night' (1874)

XVII

How the moon triumphs through the endless nights !

How the stars throb and glitter as they wheel
Their thick processions of supernal lights

Around the blue vault obdurate as steel !
And men regard with passionate awe and yearning
The mighty marching and the golden burning,
And think the heavens respond to what they feel.

Boats gliding like dark shadows of a dream,
Are glorified from vision as they pass
The quivering moonbridge on the deep black stream ;
Cold windows kindle their dead glooms of glass
To restless crystals ; cornice, dome, and column
Emerge from chaos in the splendour solemn ;
Like faëry lakes gleam lawns of dewy grass.

With such a living light these dead eyes shine,
These eyes of sightless heaven, that as we gaze
We read a pity, tremulous, divine,
Or cold majestic scorn in their pure rays :
Fond man ! they are not haughty, are not tender ;
There is no heart or mind in all their splendour,
They thread mere puppets all their marvellous
maze.

If we could near them with the flight unflown,
We should but find them worlds as sad as this,
Or suns all self-consuming like our own
Enrined by planet worlds as much amiss :
Then wax and wane through fusion and confusion ;
The spheres eternal are a grand illusion,
The empyréan is a void abyss.

THE HON. RODEN BERKELEY
WRIOTHESLEY NOEL

Like Thomson, he has the essential store of sincerity, and a capacity for the poetical expression of real pain. . . . Roden Noel's most passionate strain is heard in his elegies upon his boy Eric, who died at the age of five, and whom he commemorates in *A Little Child's Monument*.—(*Survey*, ii. 125.)

Dark Spring

(1881)

· (From *A Little Child's Monument*)

Now the mavis and the merle
Lavish their full hearts in song ;
Peach and almond boughs unfurl
White and purple bloom along
A blue burning air,
All is very fair :
But ah ! the silence and the sorrow !
I may not borrow
Any anodyne for grief
From the joy of flower or leaf,
No healing to allay my pain
From the cool of air or rain ;
Every sweet sound grew still,
Every fair colour pale,
When his life began to wane !
They may never live again !
A child's voice and visage will
Evermore about me fail ;
And my weary feet will go
Labouring as in deep snow :
Though the year with glowing wine
Fill the living veins of vine,
While a faint moon hangs between
Broidery of a leafy screen ;
Though the glossy fig may swell,
And Night hear her Philomel,
When sweet lemon blossom breathes,
And fair Sun his falchion wreathes

With rich depending golden fruit,
 Or crimson roses at his foot,
 All is desolate and mute !
 Dark to-day, and dark to-morrow !
 Ah ! the silence and the sorrow !

JEAN INGELOW

Miss Ingelow's needless trick of antique spelling spoils her best piece, *The High Tide on the Coast of Lincolnshire, 1571*, to the eye, but not to the ear ; her liquid and vowelled melody is there at its best.—(*Survey*, ii. 128.)

Stanzas from 'The High Tide on the Coast of Lincolnshire, 1571 ' (1863)

That flow strewed wrecks about the grass,
 That ebbe swept out the flocks to sea ;
 A fatal ebbe and flow, alas !
 To manye more than myne and mee :
 But each will mourn his own (she saith),
 And sweeter woman ne'er drew breath
 Than my sonne's wife, Elizabeth.

I shall never hear her more
 By the reedy Lindis shore,
 ' Cusha ! Cusha ! Cusha ! ' calling,
 Ere the early dewes be falling ;
 I shall never hear her song,
 ' Cusha ! Cusha ! ' all along
 Where the sunny Lindis floweth,
 Goeth, floweth ;
 From the meads where melick groweth,
 When the water winding down,
 Onward floweth to the town.

I shall never see her more
 Where the reeds and rushes quiver,
 Shiver, quiver ;

Stand beside the sobbing river,
Sobbing, throbbing, in its falling
To the sandy lonesome shore ;
I shall never hear her calling,
Leave your meadow grasses mellow,
Mellow, mellow ;
Quit your cowslips, cowslips yellow ;
Come uppe Whitefoot, come uppe Lightfoot ;
Quit your pipes of parsley hollow,
Hollow, hollow ;
Come uppe Lightfoot, rise and follow ;
Lightfoot, Whitefoot,
From your clovers lift the head ;
Come uppe Jetty, follow, follow,
Jetty, to the milking shed.

ROBERT, EARL OF LYTTON

(OWEN MEREDITH)

The writer of *King Poppy*, and *Cintra*, and *The Dead Pope* is sure of praise from those who can discover him.—(*Survey*, ii. 129.)

Stanzas from ' Cintra '

(1868)

The chestnuts shiver,
The olive trees
Recoil and quiver,
Stung by the breeze,
Like sleepers awaked by a swarm of bees.

Down glimmering lanes
The grey oxen go ;
And the grumbling wains
They drag onward slow
Wail, as they wind in a woeful row,

With fruits and casks
 To the seaside land,
 Where Colares basks
 In a glory bland,
 And from gardens o'erhanging the scented sand

Great aloes glisten
 And roses dangle.
 But listen ! listen !
 The mule-bells jangle,
 Rounding the rock-hewn path's sharp angle.

As their chime dies out
 The dim woods among,
 With the ghostly shout
 And the distant song
 Of the muleteers that have pass'd along.

JOHN BYRNE LEICESTER WARREN
 (LORD DE TABLEY)

His constancy to noble form, and to an austere and often remote inspiration, are as evident as his musical and metrical gift, more studious perhaps than spontaneous, but genuine and varied.—(*Survey*, ii. 131.)

A Frosty Day (1870)

Grass afield wears silver thatch ;
 Palings all are edged with rime ;
 Frost-flowers pattern round the latch ;
 Cloud nor breeze dissolve the clime ;

When the waves are solid floor,
 And the clods are iron-bound,
 And the boughs are crystall'd hoar,
 And the red leaf nailed a-ground.

When the fieldfare's flight is slow,
 And a rosy vapour rim,
 Now the sun is small and low,
 Belts along the region dim.

When the ice-crack flies and flaws,
 Shore to shore, with thunder shock,
 Deeper than the evening daws,
 Clearer than the village clock.

When the rusty blackbird strips,
 Bunch by bunch the coral thorn ;
 And the pale day-crescent dips,
 New to heaven, a slender horn.

An Autumn Serenade (1873)

Before the tears of autumn shed
 All leaves away at winter's door,
 My queen, across the foliage tread
 Of yellow gusty woodland floor ;
 And watch the squirrel overhead
 In stories of her pine-trees hoar.

When only redbreast chirps thee on,
 And fingered chestnut leaves are cast ;
 And gaudy greenwood gathers wan
 On lime and beech, and sickens fast ;
 And acorns thicken paths upon,
 And shrew-mice treasure winter mast ;

When plovers tremble up to cloud,
 And starling legions whirl apace ;
 And redwing nations restless-loud
 Are over every fallow's face ;
 And barren branches like a shroud
 Blacken the sun-way's interspace ;

The winds, all summer idly dead,
 Give prelude to their winter tune.
 Grey hoar-frost hears them, from his bed
 Lays out white hands, and wakens soon.
 He laughs as souging elm-trees shed
 Old homes of breeding rooks in June.

SIR ALFRED COMYN LYALL

An eminent administrator and scholar, Lyall had a rare perception of the Indian, and also of the Anglo-Indian, point of view; and the matter of most of his poetry is the eternal clash of East and West. . . . Lyall's form and finish, at their best, are very good, while it is easy to see in what studios he has worked.—(*Survey*, ii. 134, 135.)

Somnia : India, 1857

(1889)

A late moon that sinks o'er a river
 Flowing luminous, languid, and still;
 Long white tents that shroud men, and shiver
 In the cold morning breeze from the hill;

Just a thin veil of darkness above you,
 While the cool quiet hour is your own;
 Then farewell to the faces that love you,
 With the fast-fading night they'll be gone.

Look up, see above you the star-land
 Wanes dim with the flush of the dawn,
 You are called from your flight to the far land,
 And your visions must break with the morn.

But your soul, by sweet memories haunted,
 Still wanders, forgetful and free,
 To the West, and in echoes enchanted
 Hears the long winding splash of the sea.

Ah, sleep, though the falling dew wet you;
 Ah, rest in that home while you may;
 Other scenes, other sounds, shall beset you
 When you wake, and your dreams pass away.

When the sun beats aflame on your faces,
 What the old fighters felt, ye shall feel,
 When the pitiless strife of the races
 Flashes out in the smoke and the steel;

For the plain, bare and burning, lies yonder,
 And perchance, when the war-cloud has passed,
 Never more, day or night, shalt thou wander
 And thy sleep shall be dreamless at last.

SIR EDWIN ARNOLD

Sir Edwin Arnold was inspired by the history of Gotama, the Buddha. . . . *The Light of Asia* introduced many readers to a great religion.—(*Survey*, ii. 135.)

Peroration to 'The Light of Asia' (1879)

Ah ! Blessed Lord ! oh ! High Deliverer !
 Forgive this feeble script, which doth Thee wrong,
 Measuring with little wit thy lofty Love.
 Ah ! Lover ! Brother ! Guide ! Lamp of the Law !
 I take my refuge in thy name and thee !
 I take my refuge in thy Law of Good !
 I take my refuge in thy Order ! OM !
 The Dew is on the Lotus ! Rise, Great Sun !
 And lift my leaf and mix me with the wave.
 Om Mani padme hum,¹ the Sunrise comes !
 The Dewdrop slips into the Shining Sea !

WILLIAM JOHNSON CORY

Cory's perfect things are very few ; but in all his work there is the breath of poetry, and the note of regret and aspiration.—(*Survey*, ii. 137.)

Heraclitus (1858)

They told me, Heraclitus, they told me you were dead,
 They brought me bitter news to hear and bitter tears
 to shed.
 I wept as I remembered, how often you and I
 Had tired the sun with talking and sent him down the
 sky.

¹ These words form a ritual symbolic incantation in Buddhist mysticism. The literal meaning is 'So be it ! O lotus-jewel ! Amen !' It is (see *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*) a wishing-gem spell.—*Editors*.

And now that thou art lying, my dear old Carian guest,
 A handful of grey ashes, long, long ago at rest,
 Still are thy pleasant voices, thy nightingales, awake ;
 For Death, he taketh all away, but them he cannot take.

A Song

(1858)

I

Oh, earlier shall the rosebuds blow,
 In after years, those happier years,
 And children weep, when we lie low,
 Far fewer tears, far softer tears.

II

Oh, true shall boyish laughter ring,
 Like tinkling chimes in kinder times !
 And merrier shall the maiden sing :
 And I not there, and I not there.

III

Like lightning in the summer night
 Their mirth shall be, so quick and free ;
 And oh ! the flash of their delight
 I shall not see, I may not see.

IV

In deeper dream, with wider range,
 Those eyes shall shine, but not on mine :
 Unmoved, unblest, by worldly change,
 The dead must rest, the dead shall rest.

MARGARET VELEY

A finish of conception and form which does not always, in poetesses or poets either, accompany intensity of feeling, is conspicuous in the handful of verses bequeathed by Margaret Veley.—(*Survey*, ii. 138.)

A Lutanist

(Written c. 1872)

O well-belovèd lute,
 Whence sweetest sounds have birth,
 From thee I pluck the fruit
 Of all my joy on earth.

I wear my queen's device,
And her white hand have kissed—
I dwell in Paradise,
I am her lutanist.

What have I more to seek ?
Of old, erect and proud,
I went, with flushing cheek,
Through plaudits of the crowd.
I longed to soar on high,
Until one day I wist
That Kings were less than I,
Who am her lutanist.

High in her stately house
My southern window shines,
All grown about with boughs
Of leafy, tangled vines.
My sovereignty is there,
A world of sky and song,
And little do I care
To gaze upon the throng.
The busy world below
May hurry on apace,
But by my heart I know
When, homeward from the chase,
My lady passes by,
Her falcon on her wrist—
Then from his turret high
Looks forth her lutanist.

I turn with watchful eyes,
Yet though I dream apart,
The drowsy music lies
Asleep within my heart,
Until she gives command—
Then at her voice it stirs,
And pours through heart and hand,
Which, being mine, are hers.

And thoughts that thrill and yearn,
 And visions sought in vain,
 Throng all around, and turn
 To music in my brain.
 A spell is in the air
 That nothing may resist,
 As I stand playing there
 Who am her lutanist.

And stories have been told
 Of me as half divine,
 Till princes offer gold
 To hear this skill of mine.
 Yet I should linger mute
 If my fair dame I missed—
 For I am but the lute,
 And she the lutanist !

EMILY BRONTË

She wrote a little very great poetry—poetry with the strain of grandeur, poetry that is an immortal expression of insuperable courage.—(*Survey*, ii. 295.)

The Old Stoic

(1846)

Riches I hold in light esteem,
 And Love I laugh to scorn ;
 And lust of fame was but a dream,
 That vanished with the morn :

And if I pray, the only prayer
 That moves my lips for me
 Is, ' Leave the heart that now I bear,
 And give me liberty ! '

Yes, as my swift days near their goal,
 'Tis all that I implore ;—
 In life and death a chainless soul,
 With courage to endure.

No Coward Soul is Mine

(The last lines of Emily Brontë) (1848)

No coward soul is mine,
No trembler in the world's storm-troubled sphere :
I see Heaven's glories shine,
And faith shines equal, arming me from fear.

O God within my breast,
Almighty, ever-present Deity !
Life—that in me has rest,
As I—undying Life—have power in Thee !

Vain are the thousand creeds
That move men's hearts, unutterably vain,
Worthless as withered weeds,
Or idle froth amid the boundless main,

To waken doubt in one
Holding so fast by Thine infinity ;
So surely anchored on
The steadfast rock of immortality.

With wide-embracing love
Thy spirit animates eternal years,
Pervades and broods above,
Changes, sustains, dissolves, creates, and rears.

Though earth and man were gone,
And suns and universes ceased to be,
And Thou were left alone,
Every existence would exist in Thee.

There is not room for Death,
Nor atom that his might could render void :
Thou—THOU art Being and Breath,
And what THOU art may never be destroyed.

MORTIMER COLLINS

Another poet, now little heeded, whose best work is marked by epigrammatic neatness, and whose lyric is often of much beauty and finish, is Mortimer Collins.—(*Survey*, ii. 139.)

Evensong

(1860)

I

The winds are sleeping on the sea,
 The oxen on the starlit lea,
 Hushed is the endless song of streams—
 It is the time of silent dreams.
 It is the time when helplessly
 In sleep's entwining arms we lie.
 But ever, Lord, thou dost awake
 And keep us, for Thy mercy's sake.

II

Thou keepest every fluttering bird
 By whose swift wing the leaves are stirred ;
 Thou keepest every insect fair
 That dances in the sultry air ;
 Thine are the flowers the summer dawn
 Awakes in field or shadowy lawn ;
 And ever, Lord, Thy sovran eye
 Preserves us, as in sleep we lie.

III

Father of mercies ! Trustfully
 This night we cast ourselves on Thee.
 O keep us, while the wing of sleep
 Floats softly o'er the heaving deep !
 O keep us, while the silent hours
 Pass on in starlight or in showers !
 And let our prayers and praises rise
 To Thee, beneath the morning skies !

CHARLES KINGSLEY

Kingsley's poetical power, which is most genuine, is chiefly confined to lyric and narrative . . . he is at his best when he sings.—(*Survey*, ii. 314, 315.)

The Sands of Dee

(1858)

'O Mary, go and call the cattle home,
And call the cattle home,
And call the cattle home!
Across the sands of Dee';

The western wind was wild and dank with foam,
And all alone went she.

The western tide crept up along the sand,
And o'er and o'er the sand,
And round and round the sand,
As far as eye could see.

The rolling mist came down and hid the land:
And never home came she.

'Oh! is it weed, or fish, or floating hair—
A tress of golden hair,
A drownèd maiden's hair,
Above the nets at sea?'

Was never salmon yet that shone so fair
Among the stakes of Dee.

They rowed her in across the rolling foam,
The cruel crawling foam,
The cruel hungry foam,
To her grave beside the sea:

But still the boatmen hear her call the cattle home
Across the sands of Dee.

Three Fishers

(1858)

Three fishers went sailing out into the west,
 Out into the west, as the sun went down,
 Each thought of the woman who loved him best,
 And the children stood watching them out of the town ;
 For men must work, and women must weep,
 And there's little to earn, and many to keep,
 Though the harbour-bar be moaning.

Three wives sat up in the lighthouse tower,
 And they trimmed the lamps as the sun went down ;
 They looked at the squall, and they looked at the shower,
 And the night-rack came rolling up ragged and brown ;
 But men must work, and women must weep,
 Though storms be sudden, and waters deep,
 And the harbour-bar be moaning.

Three corpses lie out on the shining sands,
 In the morning gleam, as the tide goes down,
 And the women are weeping and wringing their hands,
 For those who will never come home to the town.
 For men must work, and women must weep,
 And the sooner it's over, the sooner to sleep,
 And good-bye to the bar and its moaning.

The ' Old, Old Song '

(1862)

When all the world is young, lad,
 And all the trees are green ;
 And every goose a swan, lad,
 And every lass a queen ;
 Then hey for boot and horse, lad,
 And round the world away ;
 Young blood must have its course, lad,
 And every dog his day.

When all the world is old, lad,
 And all the trees are brown ;
 And all the sport is stale, lad,
 And all the wheels run down :

Creep home, and take your place **there**,
The spent and maimed among :
God grant you find one face there
You loved when all was young.

HENRY KINGSLEY

. . . He wrote one simple-seeming piece of verse, 'Magdalen
at Michael's gate tirlèd at the pin,' which is of piercing quality.
—(*Survey*, ii. 317.)

Magdalen

Magdalen at Michael's gate
Tirlèd at the pin ;
On Joseph's thorn sang the blackbird,
'Let her in ! Let her in !'

'Hast thou seen the wounds ?' said Michael,
'Know'st thou thy sin ?'
'It is evening, evening,' sang the blackbird,
'Let her in ! Let her in !'

'Yes, I have seen the wounds,
And I know my sin.'
'She knows it well, well, well,' sang the blackbird,
'Let her in ! Let her in !'

'Thou bringest no offerings,' said Michael.
'Nought save sin.'
And the blackbird sang, 'She is sorry, sorry, sorry,
'Let her in ! Let her in !'

When he had sung himself to sleep,
And night did begin,
One came and open'd Michael's gate,
And Magdalen went in.

THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY

Beside the rarer and more piercing note of Wordsworth or of Scott, Macaulay's bugle has the ring not so much of baser as of less tempered metal. . . . But his verse, like his prose, is genuine for all that. Compare it, again, in its own kind, with that of his successors Aytoun or Sir Francis Doyle, both of them spirited, impetuous makers of martial lays, and its excellence is conspicuous.—(*Survey*, i. 132.)

The Armada

(1848)

Attend, all ye who list to hear our noble England's
praise ;
I tell of the thrice famous deeds she wrought in
ancient days,
When that great fleet invincible against her bore in vain
The richest spoils of Mexico, the stoutest hearts of Spain.
It was about the lovely close of a warm summer day,
There came a gallant merchant-ship full sail to Ply-
mouth Bay ;
Her crew hath seen Castile's black fleet, beyond Aurigny's
isle,
At earliest twilight, on the waves lie heaving many a
mile,
At sunrise she escaped their van, by God's especial
grace ;
And the tall Pinta, till the noon, had held her close in
chase.
Forthwith a guard at every gun was placed along the
wall ;
The beacon blazed upon the roof of Edgumbe's lofty
hall ;
Many a light fishing-bark put out to pry along the
coast,
And with loose rein and bloody spur rode inland many
a post.
With his white hair unbonneted, the stout old sheriff
comes ;
Behind him march the halberdiers ; before him sound
the drums ;

His yeomen round the market cross make clear an ample
 space ;
 For there behoves him to set up the standard of Her
 Grace.
 And haughtily the trumpets peal, and gaily dance the
 bells,
 As slow upon the labouring wind the royal blazon swells.
 Look how the Lion of the sea lifts up his ancient crown,
 And underneath his deadly paw treads the gay lilies
 down !
 So stalked he when he turned to flight, on that famed
 Picard field,
 Bohemia's plume, and Genoa's bow, and Cæsar's eagle
 shield.
 So glared he when at Agincourt in wrath he turned to
 bay,
 And crushed and torn beneath his claws the princely
 hunters lay.
 Ho ! strike the flagstaff deep, Sir Knight : ho ! scatter
 flowers, fair maids :
 Ho ! gunners, fire a loud salute : ho ! gallants, draw
 your blades :
 Thou sun, shine on her joyously : ye breezes, waft her
 wide ;
 Our glorious SEMPER EADEM, the banner of our
 pride.
 The freshening breeze of eve unfurled that banner's
 massy fold ;
 The parting gleam of sunshine kissed that haughty scroll
 of gold ;
 Night sank upon the dusky beach and on the purple
 sea,
 Such night in England ne'er had been, nor e'er again
 shall be.
 From Eddystone to Berwick bounds, from Lynn to Mil-
 ford Bay,
 That time of slumber was as bright and busy as the
 day ;

For swift to east and swift to west the ghastly war-
 flame spread,
 High on St. Michael's Mount it shone : it shone on
 Beachy Head.
 Far on the deep the Spaniard saw, along each southern
 shire,
 Cape beyond cape, in endless range, those twinkling
 points of fire.
 The fisher left his skiff to rock on Tamar's glittering
 waves :
 The rugged miners poured to war from Mendip's sun-
 less caves !
 O'er Longleat's towers, o'er Cranbourne's oaks, the fiery
 herald flew :
 He roused the shepherds of Stonehenge, the rangers of
 Beaulieu.
 Right sharp and quick the bells all night rang out from
 Bristol town,
 And ere the day three hundred horse had met on Clifton
 down ;
 The sentinel on Whitehall gate looked forth into the
 night,
 And saw o'erhanging Richmond Hill the streak of
 blood-red light :
 Then bugle's note and cannon's roar the death-like
 silence broke,
 And with one start, and with one cry, the royal city
 woke.
 At once on all her stately gates arose the answering
 fires ;
 At once the wild alarum clashed from all her reeling
 spires ;
 From all the batteries of the Tower pealed loud the
 voice of fear ;
 And all the thousand masts of Thames sent back a
 louder cheer ;
 And from the furthest wards was heard the rush of
 hurrying feet,

And the broad streams of pikes and flags rushed down
 each roaring street ;
 And broader still became the blaze, and louder still the
 din,
 As fast from every village round the horse came spur-
 ring in.
 And eastward straight from wild Blackheath the war-
 like errand went,
 And roused in many an ancient hall the gallant squires
 of Kent.
 Southward from Surrey's pleasant hills flew those bright
 couriers forth ;
 High on bleak Hampstead's swarthy moor they started
 for the north ;
 And on, and on, without a pause, untired they bounded
 still :
 All night from tower to tower they sprang ; they sprang
 from hill to hill :
 Till the proud Peak unfurled the flag o'er Darwin's
 rocky dales,
 Till like volcanoes flared to heaven the stormy hills of
 Wales,
 Till twelve fair counties saw the blaze on Malvern's
 lonely height,
 Till streamed in crimson on the wind the Wrekin's
 crest of light,
 Till broad and fierce the star came forth on Ely's stately
 fane,
 And tower and hamlet rose in arms o'er all the bound-
 less plain ;
 Till Belvoir's lordly terraces the sign to Lincoln sent,
 And Lincoln sped the message on o'er the wide vale of
 Trent ;
 Till Skiddaw saw the fire that burned on Gaunt's em-
 battled pile,
 And the red glare on Skiddaw roused the burghers of
 Carlisle.

Epitaph on a Jacobite

(1845)

To my true king I offer'd free from stain
 Courage and faith ; vain faith, and courage vain.
 For him I threw lands, honours, wealth, away,
 And one dear hope, that was more prized than they.
 For him I languish'd in a foreign clime,
 Grey-hair'd with sorrow in my manhood's prime ;
 Heard on Lavernia Scargill's whispering trees,
 And pined by Arno for my lovelier Tees ;
 Beheld each night my home in fever'd sleep,
 Each morning started from the dream to weep ;
 Till God, who saw me tried too sorely, gave
 The resting-place I ask'd, an early grave.
 O thou, whom chance leads to this nameless stone,
 From that proud country which was once mine own,
 By those white cliffs I never more must see,
 By that dear language which I spake like thee,
 Forget all feuds, and shed one English tear
 O'er English dust. A broken heart lies here.

WILLIAM EDMONDSTOUNE AYTOUN

Aytoun's eight Jacobite poems, *Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers*, proved their popularity by many editions, though they often tempt us, rather unfairly, to call them the work of a less efficient Macaulay.—(*Survey*, ii. 154.)

Stanzas from 'Edinburgh after Flodden' (1848)

I

News of battle !—news of battle !
 Hark ! 'tis ringing down the street :
 And the archways and the pavement
 Bear the clang of hurrying feet.
 News of battle ! who hath brought it ?
 News of triumph ? Who should bring
 Tidings from our noble army,
 Greetings from our gallant King ?

All last night we watched the beacons
 Blazing on the hills afar,
 Each one bearing, as it kindled,
 Message of the opened war.
 All night long the northern streamers
 Shot across the trembling sky :
 Fearful lights that never beckon
 Save when kings or heroes die.

II

News of battle ! Who hath brought it ?
 All are thronging to the gate ;
 ‘Warder—warder ! open quickly !
 Man—is this a time to wait ?’
 And the heavy gates are opened :
 Then a murmur long and loud,
 And a cry of fear and wonder
 Burst from out the bending crowd.
 For they see in battered harness
 Only one hard-stricken man ;
 And his weary steed is wounded,
 And his cheek is pale and wan :
 Spearless hangs a bloody banner
 In his weak and drooping hand—
 God ! can that be Randolph Murray,
 Captain of the city band ?

III

Round him rush the people, crying,
 ‘Tell us all—oh, tell us true !
 Where are they who went to battle,
 Randolph Murray, sworn to you ?
 Where are they, our brothers—children ?
 Have they met the English foe ?
 Why art thou alone, unfollowed ?
 Is it weal or is it woe ?’

Like a corpse the grisly warrior
 Looks from out his helm of steel ;
 But no word he speaks in answer—
 Only with his armed heel
 Chides his weary steed, and onward
 Up the city streets they ride ;
 Fathers, sisters, mothers, children,
 Shrieking, praying by his side.
 ‘ By the God that made thee, Randolph !
 Tell us what mischance hath come.’
 Then he lifts his riven banner,
 And the asker’s voice is dumb.

IV

The elders of the city
 Have met within their hall
 The men whom good King James had charged
 To watch the tower and wall.

* * *

V

Then in came Randolph Murray,—
 His step was slow and weak,
 And, as he doffed his dinted helm,
 The tears ran down his cheek :
 They fell upon his corslet
 And on his mailed hand,
 As he gazed around him wistfully,
 Leaning sorely on his brand.
 And none who then beheld him
 But straight were smote with fear,
 For a bolder and a sterner man
 Had never couched a spear.
 They knew so sad a messenger
 Some ghastly news must bring ;
 And all of them were fathers,
 And their sons were with the King.

SIR FRANCIS HASTINGS DOYLE

His real field is heroic fighting, rescue, and adventure.—
(*Survey*, ii. 141.)

The Private of the Buffs (1866)

‘Some Sikhs and a private of the Buffs having remained behind with the grog carts, fell into the hands of the Chinese. On the next morning they were brought before the authorities, and commanded to perform the *kotow*. The Sikhs obeyed, but Moyse, the English soldier, declaring that he would not prostrate himself before any Chinaman alive, was immediately knocked upon the head, and his body thrown on a dunghill.’—*The Times* (an incident in the China War, which ended in 1860).

Last night, among his fellow roughs,
He jested, quaffed, and swore,
A drunken private of the Buffs,
Who never looked before.
To-day, beneath the foeman’s frown,
He stands in Elgin’s place,
Ambassador from Britain’s crown,
And type of all her race.

Poor, reckless, rude, low-born, untaught,
Bewildered, and alone,
A heart, with English instinct fraught,
He yet can call his own.
Aye, tear his body limb from limb,
Bring cord, or axe, or flame :
He only knows, that not through *him*
Shall England come to shame.

Far Kentish hop-fields round him seemed,
Like dreams, to come and go ;
Bright leagues of cherry-blossom gleamed,
One sheet of living snow ;
The smoke, above his father’s door,
In grey soft eddyings hung :
Must he then watch it rise no more,
Doomed by himself so young ?

Yes, honour calls !—with strength like steel
 He put the vision by.
 Let dusky Indians whine and kneel ;
 An English lad must die.
 And thus, with eyes that would not shrink,
 With knee to man unbent,
 Unflinching on its dreadful brink,
 To his red grave he went.

Vain, mightiest fleets of iron framed ;
 Vain, those all-shattering guns ;
 Unless proud England keep, untamed,
 The strong heart of her sons.
 So, let his name through Europe ring—
 A man of mean estate,
 Who died, as firm as Sparta's king,
 Because his soul was great.

ANDREW LANG

The Odyssey

As one that for a weary space has lain
 Lull'd by the song of Circe and her wine
 In gardens near the pale of Proserpine,
 Where that Ægean isle forgets the main,
 And only the low lutes of love complain,
 And only shadows of wan lovers pine—
 As such an one were glad to know the brine
 Salt on his lips, and the large air again,—
 So gladly, from the songs of modern speech
 Men turn, and see the stars, and feel the free
 Shrill wind beyond the close of heavy flowers,
 And through the music of the languid hours
 They hear like Ocean on the western beach
 The surge and thunder of the Odyssey.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

Requiem

(1887)

Under the wide and starry sky
Dig the grave and let me lie :
Glad did I live and gladly die,
And I laid me down with a will.

This be the verse you grave for me :
Here he lies where he long'd to be ;
Home is the sailor, home from sea,
And the hunter home from the hill.

In the Highlands

(1887)

In the highlands, in the country places,
Where the old plain men have rosy faces,
And the young fair maidens
Quiet eyes ;
Where essential silence chills and blesses,
And for ever in the hill-recesses
Her more lovely music
Broods and dies—

O to mount again where erst I haunted ;
Where the old red hills are bird-enchanted,
And the low green meadows
Bright with sward ;
And when even dies, the million-tinted,
And the night has come, and planets glinted,
Lo, the valley hollow
Lamp-bestarr'd !

O to dream, O to wake and wander
There, and with delight to take and render,
Through the trance of silence,
Quiet breath !

Lo ! for there, among the flowers and grasses,
 Only the mightier movement sounds and passes ;
 Only winds and rivers,
 Life and death.

THOMAS EDWARD BROWN

Vespers

(Written 1878)

O Blackbird, what a boy you are !
 How you do go it !
 Blowing your bugle to that one sweet star—
 How you do blow it !
 And does she hear you, blackbird boy, so far ?
 Or is it wasted breath ?
 ‘ Good Lord ! She is so bright
 To-night ! ’
 The blackbird saith.

GEORGE MACDONALD

The copious verse of George Macdonald shows a marked aptitude for poetic experiment ; and there is actual poetry in the blank verse of his long tales and dramatic sketches, and in his many devout and mystical ditties.—(*Survey*, ii. 109–110.)

That Holy Thing

(1883)

They all were looking for a king
 To slay their foes and lift them high :
 Thou cam’st, a little baby thing
 That made a woman cry.

O Son of Man, to right my lot
 Naught but Thy presence can avail ;
 Yet on the road Thy wheels are not,
 Nor on the sea Thy sail !

My how or when Thou will not heed,
 But come down Thine own secret stair,
 That Thou mayst answer all my need—
 Yea, every bygone prayer.

IRISH POETS

JAMES CLARENCE MANGAN

His good things are not many, but they are very good, and sometimes they are his own and sometimes they are founded on Irish originals.—(*Survey*, ii. 144.)

My Dark Rosaleen ¹

(1845)

O my Dark Rosaleen,
Do not sigh, do not weep !
The priests are on the ocean green,
They march along the deep.
There's wine from the royal Pope
Upon the ocean green ;
And Spanish ale shall give you hope,
My Dark Rosaleen !
My own Rosaleen !
Shall glad your heart, shall give you hope,
Shall give you health, and help, and hope,
My Dark Rosaleen !

Over hills and thro' dales,
Have I roamed for your sake ;
All yesterday I sailed with sails
On river and on lake.
The Erne at its highest flood
I dashed across unseen,
For there was lightning in my blood,
My Dark Rosaleen !
My own Rosaleen !

¹ This impassioned song, entitled, in the original, *Roisin Dubh*, or The Black-Haired Little Rose, was written in the reign of Elizabeth by one of the poets of the celebrated Tyreconnellian chieftain, Hugh the Red O'Donnell. It purports to be an allegorical address from Hugh to Iroland on the subject of his love and struggles for her, and his resolve to raise her again to the glorious position she held as a nation, before the irruption of the Saxon and Norman spoilers.

O there was lightning in my blood,
 Red lightning lightened thro' my blood,
 My Dark Rosaleen !

All day long, in unrest,
 To and fro, do I move.
 The very soul within my breast
 Is wasted for you, love !
 The heart in my bosom faints
 To think of you, my queen,
 My life of life, my saint of saints,
 My Dark Rosaleen !
 My own Rosaleen !
 To hear your sweet and sad complaints,
 My life, my love, my saint of saints,
 My Dark Rosaleen !

Woe and pain, pain and woe,
 Are my lot, night and noon,
 To see your bright face clouded so,
 Like to the mournful moon.
 But yet will I rear your throne
 Again in golden sheen ;
 'Tis you shall reign, shall reign alone,
 My Dark Rosaleen !
 My own Rosaleen !
 'Tis you shall have the golden throne,
 'Tis you shall reign, and reign alone,
 My Dark Rosaleen !

Over dew, over sand,
 Will I fly for your weal :
 Your holy delicate white hands
 Shall girdle me with steel.
 At home in your emerald bowers,
 From morning's dawn till e'en,
 You'll pray for me, my flower of flowers,
 My Dark Rosaleen !

My fond Rosaleen !
You'll think of me thro' daylight hours,
My virgin flower, my flower of flowers,
My Dark Rosaleen !

I could scale the blue air,
I could plough the high hills,
O I could kneel all night in prayer,
To heal your many ills !
And one beamy smile from you
Would float like light between
My toils and me, my own, my true,
My Dark Rosaleen !
My fond Rosaleen !
Would give me life and soul anew,
A second life, a soul anew,
My Dark Rosaleen !

O the Erne shall run red
With redundance of blood,
The earth shall rock beneath our tread
And flames wrap hill and wood,
And gun-peal and slogan-cry
Wake many a glen serene,
Ere you shall fade, ere you shall die,
My Dark Rosaleen !
My own Rosaleen !
The Judgment Hour must first be nigh,
Ere you can fade, ere you can die,
My Dark Rosaleen !

SIR SAMUEL FERGUSON

His true achievement was to *nerve* the poetry of Ireland, too prone to the luxury of grief, by a poetic reproduction of her heroic and tragic legends . . . he has sincerity and strength, and again and again he has the poetic accent.—(*Survey*, ii. 145.)

The Fair Hills of Ireland (1865)

(*Old Irish Song*)

A plenteous place is Ireland for hospitable cheer.

Uileacan dubh O!

Where the wholesome fruit is bursting from the yellow
barley ear ;

Uileacan dubh O!

There is honey in the trees where her misty vales
expand,

And her forest paths, in summer, are by falling waters
fann'd,

There is dew at high noontide there, and springs i' the
yellow sand

On the fair hills of holy Ireland.

Curl'd he is and ringletted, and plaited to the knee,

Uileacan dubh O!

Each captain who comes sailing across the Irish sea ;

Uileacan dubh O!

And I will make my journey, if life and health but stand,
Unto that pleasant country, that fresh and fragrant
strand,

And leave your boasted braveries, your wealth and high
command ;

For the fair hills of holy Ireland.

Large and profitable are the stacks upon the ground,

Uileacan dubh O!

The butter and the cream do wondrously abound,

Uileacan dubh O!

The cresses on the water and the sorrels are at hand,
And the cuckoo's calling daily his note of music bland,
And the bold thrush sings so bravely his song i' the
forests grand,

On the fair hills of holy Ireland.

WILLIAM ALLINGHAM

Allingham forms a link between the Irish singers and his 'pre-Raphaelite' friends, Rossetti, Millais, and Arthur Hughes, who illustrated some of his works. . . . He excels above all in simple lyric, and in 'songs of innocence.'—(*Survey*, ii. 146.)

The Fairies

(1854)

Up the airy mountain,
Down the rushy glen,
We daren't go a-hunting
For fear of little men;
Wee folk, good folk,
Trooping all together;
Green jacket, red cap,
And white owl's feather!

Down along the rocky shore
Some make their home,
They live on crispy pancakes
Of yellow tide-foam;
Some in the reeds
Of the black mountain lake,
With frogs for their watch-dogs,
All night awake.

High on the hill-top
The old king sits;
He is now so old and grey
He's nigh lost his wits
With a bridge of white mist
Columbkil he crosses,
On his stately journeys
From Slieveleague to Rosses;

Or going up with music
 On cold starry nights
 To sup with the Queen
 Of the gay Northern Lights.

They stole little Bridget
 For seven years long ;
 When she came down again
 Her friends were all gone.
 They took her lightly back,
 Between the night and morrow,
 They thought that she was fast asleep,
 But she was dead with sorrow.
 They have kept her ever since
 Deep within the lake,
 On a bed of flag-leaves,
 Watching till she wake.

By the craggy hill-side,
 Through the mosses bare,
 They have planted thorn-trees
 For pleasure here and there.
 If any man so daring
 As dig them up in spite,
 He shall find their sharpest thorns
 In his bed at night.

Up the airy mountain,
 Down the rushy glen,
 We daren't go a-hunting
 For fear of little men ;
 Wee folk, good folk,
 Trooping all together ;
 Green jacket, red cap,
 And white owl's feather !

Robin Redbreast

(1865)

(A Child's Song)

1

Goodbye, goodbye to Summer !
For Summer's nearly done ;
The garden smiling faintly,
Cool breezes in the sun ;
Our thrushes now are silent,
Our swallows flown away,—
But Robin's here, in coat of brown,
With ruddy breast-knot gay.
Robin, Robin Redbreast,
O Robin dear !
Robin sings so sweetly
In the falling of the year.

2

Bright yellow, red, and orange,
The leaves come down in hosts ;
The trees are Indian Princes,
But soon they'll turn to Ghosts ;
The leathery pears and apples
Hang russet on the bough ;
It's Autumn, Autumn, Autumn late,
'Twill soon be Winter now.
Robin, Robin Redbreast,
O Robin dear !
And what will this poor Robin do ?
For pinching days are near.

3

The fireside for the cricket,
The wheat-stack for the mouse,
When trembling night-winds whistle
And moan all round the house ;

The frosty ways like iron,
 The branches plumed with snow,—
 Alas ! in Winter dead and dark
 Where can poor Robin go ?
 Robin, Robin Redbreast,
 O Robin dear !
 And a crumb of bread for Robin,
 His little heart to cheer.

AUBREY THOMAS DE VERE

The son of Sir Aubrey de Vere, who was himself an admirable maker of sonnets, he too is a sworn Wordsworthian.—(*Survey*, ii. 147.)

The Sun-god

(1843)

I saw the Master of the Sun. He stood
 High in his luminous car, himself more bright ;
 An Archer of immeasurable might :
 On his left shoulder hung his quiver'd load ;
 Spurn'd by his steeds the eastern mountains glow'd ;
 Forward his eagle eye and bow of Light
 He bent, and while both hands that arch embow'd,
 Shaft after shaft pursued the flying night.

No wings profaned that godlike form : around
 His neck high-held an ever-moving crowd
 Of locks hung glistening : while such perfect sound
 Fell from his bowstring that th' ethereal dome
 Thrill'd as a dew-drop ; and each passing cloud
 Expanded, whitening like the ocean foam.

DIALECT POETRY

Dialect poetry in English has an odd precarious footing in letters, because the supposed speakers and hearers of it are the peasant race, which, unlike that of Scotland or Ireland or Wales, has actually little sense for letters.—(*Survey*, ii. 148.)

WILLIAM BARNES

Barnes has a happy turn for a refrain ; little depth of music, but a steady enough surface ripple of it, rather soothing and pleasant, like the gentle buzzing and burring of the Western speech itself. . . . But whatever its exact rank in literature, there is no doubt that this kind of work ought to be done for every dialect that is worthy of such treatment, so as to save for record some little bit of joyous and forgotten life ; and well if it is done as aptly as Barnes can do it.—(*Survey*, ii. 149, 150.)

The Motherless Child

(1859)

The zun'd a-zet back t'other night,
 But in the zettèn pleâce
 The clouds, a-redden'd by his light,
 Still glow'd avore my feâce.
 An' I've a-lost my Meäry's smile,
 I thought ; but still I have her chile
 Zoo like her, that my eyes can treâce
 The mother's in her daughter's feâce.
 O little feâce so near to me,
 An' like thy mother's gone ; why need I zay,
 Sweet night cloud, wi' the glow o' my lost day,
 Thy looks be always dear to me !

The zun'd a-zet another night ;
 But by the moon on high,
 He still did zend us back his light
 Below a cwolder sky.
 My Meäry's in a better land,
 I thought, but still her chile's at hand,

An' in her chile she'll zend me on
 Her love, though she herself's a gone.
 O little chile so near to me,
 An' like thy mother gone; why need I zay,
 Sweet moon, the messenger vrom my lost day,
 Thy looks be always dear to me.

Linden Lea

(1859)

'Ithin the woodlands, flow'ry glëaded,
 By the woak trees' mossy moot,
 The sheenen grass blëades, timber shëaded,
 Now do quiver under voot;
 An' birds do whissle auverhead,
 An' water's bubblen in its bed;
 An' there vor me, the apple tree
 Do lean down low in Linden Lea.

When leaves that lëately were a-springen,
 Now do fade 'ithin the copse,
 An' painted birds do hush their zingen,
 Up upon the timber tops;
 An' brown-leaved fruit's a-turning red,
 In cloudless zunsheen auverhead,
 Wi' fruit vor me, the apple tree
 Do lean down low in Linden Lea.

Let other vo'k mëake money vaster,
 In the air o' dark-room'd towns;
 I don't dread a peevish mëaster,
 Though noo man may heed my frowns.
 I be free to go abroad,
 Or take agëan my hwomeward road,
 To where, vor me, the apple tree
 Do lean down low in Linden Lea.

LIGHTER VERSE

The change of manners and temper during the reign of the Queen is, naturally enough, mirrored in the lighter kind of verse, just as it is in fiction, in reviewing, and in the essay.—(*Survey*, ii. 151.)

FRANCIS SYLVESTER MAHONY

. . . His best work is still the truly melodious *Shandon Bells* and *The Groves of Blarney*.—(*Survey*, ii. 152.)

The Shandon Bells

(1834)

With deep affection,
And recollection,
I often think of
 Those Shandon bells,
Whose sounds so wild would,
In the days of childhood,
Fling round my cradle
 Their magic spells.
On this I ponder.
Where'er I wander,
And thus grow fonder,
 Sweet Cork, of thee ;
With thy bells of Shandon,
That sound so grand on
The pleasant waters
 Of the River Lee.

I've heard bells chiming
Full many a clime in,
Tolling sublime in
 Cathedral shrine,
While at a glib rate
Brass tongues would vibrate—
But all the music
 Spoke naught like thine ;

For memory, dwelling
 On each proud swelling
 Of the belfry knelling
 Its bold notes free,
 Made the bells of Shandon
 Sound far more grand on
 The pleasant waters
 Of the River Lee.

I've heard bells tolling
 Old Adrian's Mole in,
 Their thunder rolling
 From the Vatican,
 And cymbals glorious
 Swinging uproarious
 In the glorious turrets
 Of Notre Dame ;
 But thy sounds were sweeter
 Than the dome of Peter
 Flings o'er the Tiber,
 Pealing solemnly ;—
 O, the bells of Shandon
 Sound far more grand on
 The pleasant waters
 Of the River Lee.

There's a bell in Moscow,
 While in tower and kiosk O
 In Saint Sophia
 The Turkman gets ;
 And loud in air
 Calls men to prayer
 From the tapering summits
 Of tall minarets.
 Such empty phantom
 I freely grant them ;
 But there's an anthem
 More dear to me,—

'Tis the bells of Shandon
That sound so grand on
The pleasant waters
Of the River Lee.

REV. RICHARD HARRIS BARHAM

As I Laye A-Thynkyng (1845)

(From *The Ingoldsby Legends*)

As I laye a-thynkyng, a-thynkyng, a-thynkyng,
Merrie sang the Birde as she sat upon the spraye ;

There came a noble knyghte,
With his hauberke shynynge bryghte,
And his gallant heart was lyghte,
Free and gaye ;

As I laye a-thynkyng, he rode upon his waye.

As I laye a-thynkyng, a-thynkyng, a-thynkyng,
Sadly sang the Birde as she sat upon the tree ;

There seemed a crimson plain,
Where a gallant knyghte lay slayne,
And a steed with broken rein,
Ran free,

As I laye a-thynkyng, most pitiful to see !

As I laye a-thynkyng, a-thynkyng, a-thynkyng,
Merrie sang the Birde as she sat upon the boughe ;

A lovely mayde came bye,
And a gentle youth was nyghe,
And he breathèd many a syghe,
And a vowe ;

As I laye a-thynkyng, her hearte was gladsome now.

As I laye a-thynkyng, a-thynkyng, a-thynkyng,
Sadly sang the Birde as she sat upon the thorne ;

No more a youth was there,
But a maiden rent her haire,
And cried in sad despaire,
'That I was born !'

As I laye a-thynkyng, she perished forlorne.

176 A CENTURY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE—III

As I laye a-thynkyng, a-thynkyng, a-thynkyng,
 Sweetly sang the Birde as she sat upon the briar ;
 There came a lovely childe,
 And his face was meek and mild,
 Yet joyously he smiled
 On his sire ;
 As I laye a-thynkyng, a cherub mote admire.

But I laye a-thynkyng, a-thynkyng, a-thynkyng,
 And sadly sang the Birde as it perch'd upon a bier ;
 That joyous smile was gone,
 And the face was white and wan,
 As the downe upon the swan
 Doth appear,
 As I laye a-thynkyng—oh ! bitter flow'd the tear !

As I laye a-thynkyng, the golden sun was synkyng,
 O merrie sang that Birde as it glittered on her breast,
 With a thousand gorgeous dyes,
 While soaring to the skies,
 'Mid the stars she seemed to rise,
 As to her nest,
 As I laye a-thynkyng, her meaning was exprest :
 ' Follow, follow me away,
 It boots not to delay '—
 'Twas so she seemed to saye—
 ' Here is rest ! '

CHARLES STUART CALVERLEY

The union of the translator's craft with that of burlesque and humorous verse is conspicuous in Charles Stuart Blayds, afterwards Charles Stuart Calverley.—(*Survey*, ii. 155.)

Striking

(1867)

It was a railway passenger,
And he lept out jauntilie.
'Now up and bear, thou stout portèr,
My two chattèls to me.

'Bring hither, bring hither my bag so red,
And portmanteau so brown :
(They lie in the van, for a trusty man
He labelled them London town :)

'And fetch me eke a cabman bold,
That I may be his fare, his fare ;
And he shall have a good shilling,
If by two of the clock he do me bring
To the Terminus, Euston Square.'

'Now,—so to thee the saints alway,
Good gentleman, give luck,—
As never a cab may I find this day,
For the cabman wights have struck :
And now, I wis, at the Red Post Inn,
Or else at the Dog and Duck,
Or at Unicorn Blue, or at Green Griffin,
The nut-brown ale and the fine old gin
Right pleasantly they do suck.'

‘Now rede me aright, thou stout portèr,
 What were it best that I should do :
 For woe is me, an’ I reach not there
 Or ever the clock strike two.’

‘I have a son, a lytel son ;
 Fleet is his foot as the wild roebuck’s :
 Give him a shilling, and eke a brown,
 And he shall carry thy fardels down
 To Euston, or half over London town,
 On one of the station trucks.’

Then forth in a hurry did they twain fare,
 The gent, and the son of the stout portèr,
 Who fled like an arrow, nor turned a hair,
 Through all the mire and muck :
 ‘A ticket, a ticket, sir clerk, I pray :
 For by two of the clock must I needs away.’
 ‘That may hardly be,’ the clerk did say,
 ‘For indeed—the clocks have struck.’

Ballad

(Part I)

(1872)

The auld wife sat at her ivied door,
(Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese)
 A thing she had frequently done before ;
 And her spectacles lay on her aproned knees.

The piper he piped on the hill-top high,
(Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese)
 Till the cow said ‘I die,’ and the goose asked ‘Why ?’
 And the dog said nothing, but searched for fleas.

The farmer he strove through the square farmyard ;
(Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese)
 His last brew of ale was a trifle hard—
 The connexion of which with the plot one sees.

The farmer's daughter hath frank blue eyes ;
(Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese)
 She hears the rooks caw in the windy skies,
 As she sits at her lattice and shells her peas.

The farmer's daughter hath ripe red lips ;
(Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese)
 If you try to approach her, away she skips
 Over tables and chairs with apparent ease.

The farmer's daughter hath soft brown hair ;
(Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese)
 And I met with a ballad, I can't say where,
 Which wholly consisted of lines like these.

Peace : A Study (1872)

He stood, a worn-out City clerk—
 Who'd toil'd, and seen no holiday,
 For forty years from dawn to dark—
 Alone beside Caermarthen Bay.

He felt the salt spray on his lips ;
 Heard children's voices on the sands ;
 Up the sun's path he saw the ships
 Sail on and on to other lands ;

And laugh'd aloud. Each sight and sound
 To him was joy too deep for tears ;
 He sat him on the beach, and bound
 A blue bandana round his ears,

And thought how, posted near his door,
 His own green door on Camden Hill,
 Two bands at least, most likely more,
 Were mingling at their own sweet will

Verdi with Vance. And at the thought
 He laugh'd again, and softly drew
 That Morning Herald that he'd bought
 Forth from his breast, and read it through.

.

FREDERICK LOCKER-LAMPSON

Frederick Locker, who in 1885 assumed the surname of Lampson, is the nicest connoisseur of this period, and along with hackeray the nicest craftsman in the more poetical species of light verse.—(*Survey*, ii. 157.)

iccadilly (1857)

iccadilly!—shops, palaces, bustle, and breeze,
 'he whirring of wheels, and the murmur of trees,
 by daylight, or nightlight,—or noisy, or stillly,—
 Vhatever my mood is—I love Piccadilly.

Vet nights, when the gas on the pavement is streaming,
 and young Love is watching and old Love is dreaming,
 and Beauty is whirled off to conquest, where shrilly
 remona makes nimble thy toes, Piccadilly!

Bright days, when we leisurely pace to and fro,
 and meet all the people we do or don't know,—
 Here is jolly old Brown, and his fair daughter Lillie,—
 Jo wonder, young pilgrim, you like Piccadilly!

See yonder pair riding, how fondly they saunter!
 She smiles on her poet, whose heart's in a canter:
 Some envy her spouse, and some covet her filly,
 He envies them both—he's an ass, Piccadilly!

Now were I that gay bride, with a slave at my feet,
 I would choose me a house in my favourite street ;
 Yes or no—I would carry my point, willy, nilly,
 If ‘no,’ pick a quarrel, if ‘yes,’—Piccadilly !

From Primrose balcony, long ages ago,
 ‘Old Q’ sat at gaze,—who now passes below ?
 A frolicsome Statesman, the Man of the Day,
 A laughing philosopher, gallant and gay ;
 No darling of Fortune more manfully trod,
 Full of years, full of fame, and the world at his nod,
Heu, anni fugaces ! The wise and the silly,
 Old P or old Q,—we must quit Piccadilly.

Life is chequered,—a patchwork of smiles and of frowns,
 We value its ups, let us muse on its downs ;
 There’s a side that is bright, it will then turn us t’other,—
 One turn, if a good one, deserves such another.
These downs are delightful, *these* ups are not hilly,—
 Let us turn one more turn ere we quit Piccadilly.

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY

They [his rhymes] form, as we know, a bright link in the chain that runs between Prior, Praed, Locker-Lampson, and Mr. Austin Dobson ; and they betray as little effort as anything of the kind. . . . In his best-known and most beautiful things, . . . he thinks aloud, and also attains to perfect finish.—(*Survey*, ii. 251, 252.)

The Cane-Bottomed Chair (1855)

In tattered old slippers that toast at the bars,
 And a ragged old jacket perfumed with cigars,
 Away from the world and its toils and its cares,
 I’ve a snug little kingdom up four pairs of stairs.

To mount to this realm is a toil, to be sure,
 But the fire there is bright and the air rather pure ;
 And the view I behold on a sunshiny day
 Is grand through the chimney-pots over the way.

This snug little chamber is crammed in all nooks,
 With worthless old knickknacks and silly old books,
 And foolish old odds and foolish old ends,
 Cracked bargains from brokers, cheap keepsakes from
 friends.

Old armour, prints, pictures, pipes, china (all cracked),
 Old rickety tables, and chairs broken-backed ;
 A twopenny treasury, wondrous to see ;
 What matter ? 'tis pleasant to you, friend, and me.

No better divan need the Sultan require,
 Than the creaking old sofa that basks by the fire ;
 And 'tis wonderful, surely, what music you get
 From the rickety, ramshackle, wheezy spinet.

That praying-rug came from a Turcoman's camp ;
 By Tiber once twinkled that brazen old lamp ;
 A Mameluke fierce yonder dagger has drawn :
 'Tis a murderous knife to toast muffins upon.

Long, long through the hours, and the night, and the
 chimes,
 Here we talk of old books, and old friends, and old
 times ;
 As we sit in a fog made of rich Latakie
 This chamber is pleasant to you, friend, and me.

But of all the cheap treasures that garnish my nest,
 There's one that I love and I cherish the best ;
 For the finest of couches that's padded with hair
 I never would change thee, my cane-bottomed chair.

'Tis a bandy-legged, high-shouldered, worm-eaten seat,
With a creaking old back, and twisted old feet ;
But since the fair morning when Fanny sat there,
I bless thee, and love thee, old cane-bottomed chair.

If chairs have but feeling in holding such charms,
A thrill must have passed through your withered old
arms !

I looked, and I longed, and I wished in despair—
I wished myself turned to a cane-bottomed chair.

It was but a moment she sat in this place,
She'd a scarf on her neck, and a smile on her face !
A smile on her face, and a rose in her hair,
And she sat there, and bloomed in my cane-bottomed
chair.

And as I have valued my chair ever since,
Like the shrine of a saint, or the throne of a prince ;
Saint Fanny, my patroness sweet I declare,
The queen of my heart and my cane-bottomed chair.

When the candles burn low, and the company's gone,
In the silence of night as I sit here alone—
I sit here alone, but we yet are a pair—
My Fanny I see in my cane-bottomed chair.

She comes from the past and revisits my room ;
She looks as she then did, all beauty and bloom ;
So smiling and tender, so fresh and so fair,
And yonder she sits in my cane-bottomed chair.

CHARLES LUTWIDGE DODGSON

(LEWIS CARROLL)

‘Mr. Dodgson neither claimed nor acknowledged any connexion with the books not published under his name’; that is, Mr. Charles Lutwidge Dodgson would not formally own to the works of ‘Lewis Carroll.’ . . . Some links, however, between the two men seem to be established by circumstantial evidence.—(*Survey*, ii. 158.)

You are old, Father William(From *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*) (1865)

‘You are old, Father William,’ the young man said,
 ‘And your hair has become very white;
 And yet you incessantly stand on your head—
 Do you think, at your age, it is right?’

‘In my youth,’ Father William replied to his son,
 ‘I feared it might injure the brain;
 But, now that I’m perfectly sure I have none,
 Why, I do it again and again.’

‘You are old,’ said the youth, ‘as I mentioned before,
 And have grown most uncommonly fat;
 Yet you turned a back-somersault in at the door—
 Pray, what is the reason of that?’

‘In my youth,’ said the sage, as he shook his grey locks,
 ‘I kept all my limbs very supple
 By the use of this ointment—one shilling the box—
 Allow me to sell you a couple?’

‘You are old,’ said the youth, ‘and your jaws are too weak
 For anything tougher than suet;
 Yet you finished the goose, with the bones and the beak—
 Pray how did you manage to do it?’

'In my youth,' said his father, 'I took to the law,
And argued each case with my wife;
And the muscular strength, which it gave to my jaw,
Has lasted the rest of my life.'

'You are old,' said the youth, 'one would hardly suppose
That your eye was as steady as ever;
Yet you balanced an eel on the end of your nose—
What made you so awfully clever?'

'I have answered three questions, and that is enough,'
Said his father; 'don't give yourself airs!
Do you think I can listen all day to such stuff?
Be off, or I'll kick you downstairs!'

EDWARD LEAR

The history of nonsense, considered as a form of art, has yet to be written; but in the chapters that would be devoted to the 'logic of nonsense' and to the 'rhythm of nonsense' Edward Lear would make a most honourable figure.—(Survey, ii. 159.)

From 'The Book of Nonsense' (1846)

There was an Old Person of Hurst,
Who drank when he was not athirst;
When they said, 'You'll grow fatter,'
He answered, 'What matter?'
That globular Person of Hurst.

There was a Young Lady of Norway,
Who casually sat in a doorway;
When the door squeezed her flat,
She exclaimed, 'What of that?'
This courageous Young Lady of Norway.

There was an Old Man with a poker,
Who painted his face with red ochre;
When they said, 'You're a Guy!'
He made no reply,
But knocked them all down with his poker.

SIR WILLIAM SCHWENK GILBERT

The verse of Sir William Schwenk Gilbert has had a longer lease and a bigger audience than anything else of the kind written during the last century . . . everywhere in his work there is the same sure knack of rhyme, and the same easy, abundant invention of musical-satirical cadence.—(*Survey*, ii. 160, 161.)

Emily, John, James, and I

A Derby Legend

(From *The Bab Ballads*)

(1878)

EMILY JANE was a nursery maid,
JAMES was a bold Life Guard,
JOHN was a constable, poorly paid
(And I am a doggerel bard).

A very good girl was EMILY JANE,
JIMMY was good and true,
JOHN was a very good man in the main
(And I am a good man too).

Rivals for EMMIE were JOHNNIE and JAMES,
Though EMILY liked them both;
She couldn't tell which had the strongest claims
(And I couldn't take my oath).

But sooner or later you're certain to find
Your sentiments can't lie hid—
JANE thought it was time that she made up her mind
(And I think it was time she did).

Said JANE, with a smirk, and a blush on her face,
'I'll promise to wed the boy
Who takes me to-morrow to Epsom Race!'
(Which I would have done, with joy).

From JOHNNY escaped an expression of pain,
 But JIMMY said, 'Done with you !'
 I'll take you with pleasure, my EMILY JANE !'
 (And I would have said so too).

JOHN lay on the ground, and he roared like mad
 (For JOHNNIE was sore perplexed),
 And he kicked very hard at a very small lad
 (Which I often do, when vexed).

For JOHN was on duty next day with the Force,
 To punish all Epsom crimes ;
 Young people *will* cross when they're clearing the course
 (I do it myself, sometimes).

* * *

The Derby Day sun glittered gaily on cads,
 On maidens with gamboge hair,
 On sharpers and pickpockets, swindlers and pads
 (For I, with my harp, was there).

And JIMMY went down with his JANE that day,
 And JOHN by the collar or nape
 Seized everybody who came in his way
 (And I had a narrow escape).

He noticed his EMILY JANE with JIM,
 And envied the well-made elf ;
 And people remarked that he muttered ' Oh, dim !'
 (I often say ' dim !' myself).

JOHN dogged them all day, without asking their leaves ;
 For his sergeant he told, aside,
 That JIMMY and JANE were notorious thieves
 (And I think he was justified).

But JAMES wouldn't dream of abstracting a fork,
 And JENNY would blush with shame
 At stealing so much as a bottle or cork
 (A bottle I think fair game).

But ah ! there's another more serious crime !

They wickedly strayed upon

The course, at a critical moment of time

(I pointed them out to JOHN).

The constable fell on the pair in a crack—

And then, with a demon smile,

Let JENNY cross over, but sent JIMMY back

(I played on my harp the while).

Stern JOHNNY their agony loud derides

With a very triumphant sneer—

They weep and they wail from the opposite sides

(And *I* shed a silent tear).

And JENNY is crying away like mad,

And JIMMY is swearing hard ;

And JOHNNY is looking uncommonly glad

(And I am a doggerel bard).

But JIMMY he ventured on crossing again

The scenes of our Isthmian Games—

JOHN caught him, and collared him, giving him pain

(I felt very much for JAMES).

JOHN led him away with a victor's hand,

And JIMMY was shortly seen

In the station-house under the grand Grand Stand

(As many a time *I've* been).

And JIMMY, bad boy, was imprisoned for life,

Though EMILY pleaded hard ;

And JOHNNY had EMILY JANE to wife

(And I am a doggerel bard).

INDEX TO FIRST LINES

	PAGE
Across the empty garden beds	96
A good sword and a trusty hand !	123
Ah ! Blessed Lord ! Oh ! High Deliverer !	143
A late moon that sinks o'er a river	142
All the night sleep came not upon my eyelids,	101
And you, ye stars	20
A plenteous place is Ireland for hospitable cheer. . . .	166
As I laye a thynkyng,	175
Ask me no more : the moon may draw the sea ;	44
As one that for a weary space has lain	160
Attend, all ye who list to hear our noble England's praise ;	152
At the midnight in the silence of the sleep-time,	74
A wind sways the pines,	109
Before the tears of autumn shed	141
Beyond the calumny and wrong,	122
Break, break, break,	38
But Jason, going swiftly with good heart,	98
But then the thrushes sang	78
City ! I am true son of thine ;	112
Clear stars above, thou roseate westward sky,	119
Come, fill the Cup, and in the Fire of Spring,	132
<i>Come to me in the silence of the night ;</i>	91
Consider the lilies of the field	93
Deep on the convent-roof the snows	30
Does the road wind uphill all the way ?	92
Emily Jane was a nursery maid,	186
England, we love thee better than we know—	18
Give a man a horse he can ride,	135
Give honour unto Luke Evangelist.	87
Give me the lowest place : not that I dare	94
Gone were but the Winter,	88
Good-bye, good-bye to Summer !	169
Go where the waters fall,	15
Grass afield wears silver thatch	140
Half a league, half a league,	45
Hark ! ah, the nightingale—	24
Heap cassia, sandal buds and stripes	32
Heaven overarches earth and sea,	96
Here, where the world is quiet ;	106
He stood, a worn-out City clerk—	179
Ho ! for the Sangraal ! vanish'd Vase of Heaven !	124
Home they brought her warrior dead :	44
How the moon triumphs through the endless nights !	136
From that which began ;	109

	PAGE
If I could trust mine own self with your fate ; . . .	95
If love were what the rose is,	102
If she but knew that I am weeping	129
I have known cities with the strong-armed Rhine. . .	18
I lift my heavy heart up solemnly,	77
In tattered old slippers that toast at the bars, . .	181
In the bleak mid-winter	94
In the highlands, in the country places,	161
I saw the Master of the Sun. He stood	170
I sprang to the stirrup,	53
'Ithun the woodlands, flow'ry gléaded,	172
It little profits that an idle king,	35
It was a railway passenger	177
Jerusalem the glorious !	19
Just for a handful of silver he left us,	55
<i>Last night</i> , among his fellow-roughs,	159
Let my voice ring out and over the earth,	135
Let us begin and carry up this corpse,	60
Lonely o'er the dying ember	125
Look in my face ! my name is Might-have-been ; . .	88
Love is and was my Lord and King,	42
Magdalen at Michael's gate	151
My good blade carves the casques of men,	31
My heart is like a singing bird	91
My little Son, who look'd from thoughtful eyes . .	120
My love is the flaming Sword	135
News of battle !—news of battle !	156
No coward soul is mine,	147
Now the mavis and the merle	137
O Blackbird, what a boy you are !	162
O born in days when wits were fresh and clear, . .	25
O briar-scents, on yon wet wing	110
Of all the thoughts of God that are	75
Of old sat Freedom on the heights,	37
Oh, earlier shall the rosebuds blow,	144
Oh, happy, happy maid,	114
Oh, to be in England	56
O Mary, go and call the cattle home,	149
O my Dark Rosaleen,	163
Once I was part of the music I heard	110
On the sea and at the Hogue, sixteen hundred ninety-two,	69
O that 'twere possible	48
Others abide our question Thou art free.	20
O well-beloved lute,	144
O well for him whose will is strong !	47
O yet we trust that somehow good	41
Passing away, saith the World, passing away . . .	92
Piccadilly !—shops, palaces, bustle, and breeze . .	180
Praise to the Holiest in the height,	16
Riches I hold in light esteem,	146
Roman Virgil, thou that singest	49

	PAGE
Say, did his sisters wonder what could Joseph see, . . .	120
Say not, the struggle naught availeth, . . .	118
See what a lovely shell, . . .	47
She fell asleep on Christmas Eve : . . .	85
Sleep, little Baby, sleep ; . . .	90
So, some tempestuous morn in early June, . . .	27
Strew on her roses, roses, . . .	27
Strong Son of God, immortal Love, . . .	39
Summer is gone with all its roses, . . .	89
Sunset and evening star, . . .	51
Take heed of this small child of earth ; . . .	105
Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean, . . .	43
That flow strewed wrecks about the grass, . . .	138
The auld wife sat at her ivied door, . . .	178
The bee to the heather, . . .	111
The blessed damozel leaned out . . .	80
The chestnuts shiver, . . .	139
The feathers of the willow . . .	127
The lost days of my life until to-day, . . .	87
The murmur of the mourning ghost . . .	115
There is sweet music here that softer falls . . .	33
There was an old man with a poker . . .	185
There was an old person of Hurst, . . .	185
There was a young lady of Norway . . .	185
The sea is calm to-night. . . .	28
The splendour falls on castle walls . . .	43
The sun has set. . . .	121
<i>The sunshine of this summer afternoon,</i> . . .	117
The sun, the moon, the stars, the seas, the hills and the plains— . . .	48
The winds are sleeping on the sea, . . .	148
The wish that of the living whole . . .	41
They all were looking for a king . . .	162
The year's at the spring . . .	52
The year lies fallen and faded . . .	104
They seemed, to those who sat them meet, . . .	116
They told me, Heraclitus, they told me you were dead, . . .	143
The zun'd a-zet back t'other night. . . .	171
Tho' truths in manhood darkly join, . . .	40
Three fishers went sailing out into the west, . . .	150
Through the black, rushing smoke-bursts, . . .	22
Tirlywirly, all alone, . . .	125
'Tis a dull sight . . .	130
To my true king I offer'd free from stain . . .	156
Two red roses on a tree : . . .	126
Under the wide and starry sky . . .	161
Up the airy mountain, . . .	167
We are the music-makers . . .	127
We cannot kindle when we will . . .	24
We need not bid, for cloistered cell, . . .	115
What lovely things are dead within the sky, . . .	112

	PAGE
What was he doing, the great god Pan,	79
When all the world is young, lad,	150
When I am dead, my dearest,	89
When the hounds of spring are on winter's traces, . .	100
Where lies the land to which the ship would go ? . .	119
Where the quiet-coloured end of evening smiles . .	57
With deep affection	173
Would that I had but some portion	100
Would that the structure brave, the manifold music I build,	64
' You are old, Father William,' the young man said, .	184

